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A CHARGE

DELIVERED TO THE

CLERGY AND CHURCHWARDENS

OF THE

DIOCESE OF WORCESTER,

AT HIS PRIMARY VISITATION,

IN AUGUST, 1862,

BY

HENRY, LORD BISHOP OF WORCESTER.

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A CHARGE,

ETC.

My Reverend Brethren of the Clergy, and my Brethren of the Laity,

I have looked forward with feelings of lively interest to the opportunity which I enjoy of meeting you upon this occasion. Circumstances, over which I had little or no control, prevented me from holding a Visitation last year; and though I should have been glad to meet you sooner, the delay has given me the advantage of becoming better acquainted with the diocese before meeting you than I was a year ago. During the interval, I have had the opportunity of seeing many of the clergy, and of the laity, and of acquiring some knowledge of the diocese by personal observation in particular places; but I rejoice that the present occasion brings me face to face with all who bear Church office in it, whether clerical or lay; and I hope that our present meeting may be the foundation of much pleasant and profitable intercourse hereafter.

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To you, gentlemen Churchwardens, I desire to offer my best thanks for the services you are rendering in the important office which has been entrusted to you. There are many duties in the Church which the law wisely commits to the care of laymen, because the clergy are thereby relieved from unnecessary labour, and the work is, in fact, better done than it would be, if it were entrusted to persons who have been admitted into Holy Orders. The care of the fabric of the church and of the burial-ground, the provision of things necessary for the celebration of Divine service, the safe custody of the goods of the church, the assignment of sittings to the parishioners, the preservation of order and good behaviour in the time of Divine service—these, and other like offices, requiring, it will be readily seen, great attention and judgment, are wisely committed by the law to lay churchwardens. I need not remind you that there are many other offices in which the lay members of the Church may be of essential service in every parish, and which, though not imposed by any law other than the law of Christian charity, are often cheerfully undertaken by laymen, and performed with good effect. I refer to such things as the superintendence of schools, the management of clubs by which the poor are encouraged in habits of economy, the visitation of the sick and afflicted,

the organization and conduct of societies for religious and charitable objects, things in which the hands of the clergy are very much strengthened by the co-operation and counsel of the laity. Happy is the parish in which the clergy and laity work together in such good offices, encouraging one another to fulfil the law of Christ. I rejoice to know that the diocese of Worcester affords many examples of such parishes, and of laymen in all ranks of society, who exert themselves to discharge the obligations of the law of Christian charity; by whose kind and ready help the clergy are set free from occupations which would otherwise engage much time, and are enabled to devote themselves to their special duty of setting forth God's true and lively word, and rightly and duly administering His holy sacraments.

In reference to the duties of the lay members of the Church, I will only venture further to express an earnest hope that the men of rank and station in our several parishes will not be slow to undertake the duties of churchwardens; for it is not easy to estimate too highly the service which may be rendered to the Church by the conscientious, intelligent discharge of the functions of that honourable office.

To you, my Reverend Brethren of the Clergy, I desire to offer my best thanks for the many

expressions of regard with which, on my coming into the diocese, I was greeted by you. I should be insensible indeed to some of the best feelings of our nature, if I were not deeply touched by your kind and hearty welcome. May God give me grace to prove myself worthy of your confidence, and of the favour with which your kindness will lead you to regard my efforts to discharge the duties of a high and anxious office.

I entered upon the work, to which the providence of God has called me, not without a deep sense of its importance, and of the almost overwhelming responsibility of the person to whom it is committed, nor without the consciousness of personal infirmity, in some respects greater than ordinary, which sometimes made me look at it with fear and trembling. But I did not dare to decline it, because the path of duty seemed to lead me to it; and I felt that, if only I could prove myself a faithful minister of the Master whom I serve, there is no other work to which I could devote myself so high, so holy and so worthy of the best efforts of all the powers we have. I determined, not without much hearty prayer that God would strengthen me to fulfil the determination, to give myself wholly to the work, to devote to it for the short remainder of my life such strength and ability

as God may give me, to seek henceforth no other occupation, to know no other pleasure than to make full proof of my ministry, and to do faithfully and humbly the work which lies before me. I have found by experience that the great secret of success in all work is, to have in view a single object and to take pains in aiming at it. If I know myself, I am sure that when I undertook the office of a Bishop I had in view a single object then more entirely than ever I had in my life before; I was resolved to take pains, and I ventured to cherish a good hope, founded on the sure Word of God, that His blessing would not fail to attend one who commits his way unto Him.

I like to recall these thoughts, because I feel that they are good and wholesome, and that they assist me to keep in view the object at which I desire to aim. I venture to express them to you on this occasion, because, if they represent, as I believe, the thoughts with which you yourselves have entered upon and are trying to do the work of your ministry, the expression of them will not be without interest or advantage to you. I rejoice to think that we may thus encourage one another in our ministry. As you will allow me to express my sympathy with you in your desire to approve yourselves faithful servants of your Lord, so let me ask for your sympathy with me

in the same desire; let me beg you to give me always the benefit of your prayers on my behalf; let me claim credit at your hands for upright and pure intentions; let me ask your favourable allowance for shortcomings, from which with the utmost care and diligence I cannot hope to be altogether free.

When I first came into the diocese I naturally looked for information to the answers, which the law requires all Incumbents to return in every year to questions addressed to them by the Bishop, in order that the substance of such answers may be transmitted to her Majesty in Council. I was surprised to find that in many instances either no answer at all was returned, or the information sent was not sufficiently complete. In the spring of 1861, when the answers were required for the year 1860, there were no less than fifty-four benefices from which no return was made. In the spring of the present year no less than forty Incumbents have failed to send returns for the year 1861. This failure, on the part of some of the clergy, to comply with the requirements of the law is of no small importance; for it prevents the Bishop from obtaining sufficient knowledge of the circumstances of the several parishes in his diocese, and puts him in the wrong position of being unable to furnish the particulars which the law requires him to send to

her Majesty in Council. I feel that it is only necessary to call attention to the matter in order to insure greater readiness to conform with the provisions of the law in sending the required answers.

I am glad to take this opportunity of mentioning a work, from which I have derived much valuable information; I mean the Worcester Diocesan Church Calendar, which has now been published in each of two consecutive years. Great care has been taken by the editors to make it as complete and accurate as possible; and they accept gratefully from any quarter additional information or suggestions for improvement. It is their aim to "render the Calendar a manual of Church progress and general information, which every clergyman and layman in the diocese may find a correct book of reference." I venture to recommend the work to the support of the inhabitants of the diocese, because I know that similar publications have been highly appreciated in other dioceses, and I believe that it will be found to be of general interest and value.

To the churchwardens, as I have already observed, belongs the care of the fabric of the church and of the churchyard and of the internal church-fittings and ornaments; and I wish to take this opportunity of asking their attention, and the attention of the clergy who

are frequently called upon to take a leading part in such matters, to the provision of the law, which requires that no material alteration or addition should be made to any church or churchyard or to the internal church furniture and ornaments without a faculty obtained from the Bishop's Court. The duty of inquiring into and deciding upon such alterations and additions is thrown by the law upon the Bishop's Court; and if the sanction of that Court be not obtained, the persons making the alterations or additions may be compelled to restore the building or the churchyard to its former state at their own cost. It is found that the authority of a tribunal like the Bishop's Court, removed from all local feelings and prejudices, is of great service in preventing the recurrence of abuses from which our sacred buildings have suffered damage in former times, and in assisting the persons who undertake such works by enabling them to settle all disputed questions.

With the object of rendering applications to the Bishop's Court more simple and inexpensive, the Chancellor of the Diocese published last year a new set of rules to be observed in the grant of faculties, and a revised table of fees, by which the cost of the proceeding is reduced as low as possible. I trust that in the case of all contemplated alterations or additions in future, except

ordinary repairs, no work will be done until a faculty has been obtained; or, at least, until the question has been submitted to the Bishop, whether or not a faculty should be applied for.

The subject of fees in this and in all other ecclesiastical proceedings was brought before me by some of the clergy in different parts of the diocese, and received my best attention in the early part of last year. With the cordial co-operation and goodwill of the Chancellor and other officers of the Bishop's Court, which I am glad to take this opportunity of acknowledging in public, I have been able to make a considerable reduction in the charges for letters of Holy Orders, for curates' licences, for the consecrations of churches and churchyards, and for licences of marriage. It is my earnest desire, knowing as I do the difficulty in many cases with which the money for paying such charges is found, that no persons should be employed in any case whose services are not wanted, that the money paid should be only for work done, and that no more should be required than is enough to secure the services of competent men to do the business well.

I had the pleasure, last year, of holding a series of Confirmation services in a considerable number of parishes, chiefly in the county of Warwick. I have this year also held similar

services in several of the churches in the town of Birmingham. The devout behaviour of the candidates in every instance without exception afforded me much gratification, because I am satisfied that such behaviour was the result of careful preparation and instruction, by which the candidates were made to feel the meaning and the importance of the service. I desire to congratulate the clergy on this good fruit of their labours, for serious impressions made at the time of life at which candidates usually come for confirmation are not easily obliterated afterwards; and we may reasonably hope that, by the grace of God, such impressions may have permanent effect among our people in the fruits of a holy and religious life.

In regard to the admission of candidates into Holy Orders, it has appeared to me that two general ordinations in every year are not sufficient for the wants of the diocese; and I have made known my intention of holding three ordinations in every year in future. The times which seem most convenient for the purpose are the second Sunday in Lent, Trinity Sunday, and the Sunday after the Ember Days in December. I trust that the arrangement which fixes these times will be found to satisfy the wants of the clergy, and render unnecessary any application for private ordinations, or for letters

dimissory. I wish it also to be understood that, as a general rule, every person ordained on the title of any cure must undertake to remain in his curacy two full years at least from the time of his ordination.

The returns made by Incumbents for transmission to the Queen in Council show that, in several instances, persons are employed in the diocese as curates who have not received any licence from the Bishop. It is my duty to call the attention of the clergy to this circumstance, and to request that, except in special cases where permission may be given, no one be allowed to officiate regularly in the diocese until he has received a licence. Unless this rule be observed it is impossible to avoid cases, which bring great scandal on the Church, of persons officiating as ministers who are not duly qualified, or who are liable to objection on the ground of previous bad character. If the law of the Church be observed we have security enough, but we cannot be safe without using the protection with which the law supplies us. Before a curate can be licensed, he must produce to the Bishop his letters of Holy Orders; he must be provided with a testimonial of sound doctrine and correct manner of life for a period of three years from three beneficed clergymen, whose testimony is guaranteed by their respective

Bishops; he must subscribe the thirty-nine Articles, and the three articles of the thirty-sixth Canon; he must declare his intention of conforming to the Liturgy, and take the oaths of allegiance and supremacy, and of canonical obedience. All these securities are wanting when a person is allowed to officiate in any parish without the Bishop's licence.

I do not, indeed, object that a reasonable time should be allowed for a person to officiate without a licence, in order that the proposed curate and the incumbent may become acquainted with each other, and ascertain whether they have sufficient similarity of views and opinions to justify them in thinking that they may work happily together. But, as soon as that point is settled, it is important that application should be made to the Bishop for his licence without delay. Until the licence has been granted, the curate has no proper position in the diocese, the incumbent himself may have been deceived, the congregation in which the curate ministers has no sufficient security for his fitness for the office which he assumes, the good order of the Church is broken, and the risk incurred (which, alas! in some sad instances has been shown by the event to be real) of holy offices being profaned by unfit hands.

Upon the Bishop lies the responsibility of taking care that no one be licensed to officiate

who is not duly qualified. Upon him, too, the law has laid the responsibility of protecting the rights of the incumbent on the one hand, and of the curate on the other. He feels entitled to claim the confidence of his clergy, both incumbents and curates, in the exercise of such responsibility as a solemn trust.

Among the many excellent institutions which I find established in the diocese for religious and charitable purposes, I venture to recommend to your particular attention, my brethren of the clergy and of the laity, the two Church Extension Societies for the respective archdeaconries of Worcester and Coventry. One of these societies, the Church Extension Society for the archdeaconry of Coventry (excluding, however, it should be observed, the town of Birmingham, which, in common with other large towns, requires special measures to be adopted), has been in active operation, as you are aware, for a period of eleven years. The other was established recently, in the autumn of last year, taking its origin from a society of many years' standing but more limited in its objects, the Diocesan Church Building Society, which was instituted at Worcester in the year 1836.

The objects of these two societies have special interest for the inhabitants of their respective archdeaconries, and special claims upon their

support at this particular time. Great efforts are now being made in almost every diocese, stimulated by the manner in which the funds at the disposal of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners are distributed, to rescue the parochial system of the Church of England from the state of inefficiency into which it has been allowed to fall in many parishes, and to place it upon a sound and good foundation. The subdivision of large and populous parishes, the provision of sufficient church accommodation for the people in every district, of a house of residence for the minister and of a competent maintenance for his family, are works of urgent necessity for the practical efficiency of the parochial system of our Church. Nothing can be more perfect than the theory of this parochial system, nor could any plan be devised better adapted for the religious teaching and training of the people. If only we could make the actual state of things in our parishes correspond with the theory; if the district in which a minister is placed is not too large for the care of one man, if there is sufficient church accommodation for the people, if there is a suitable house of residence for the minister, and endowment enough to relieve him from anxiety about the maintenance of his family, no system could be better suited for training the people in the practical use of the blessed Gospel

of our Saviour. We should want only to get the right sort of men for our parish ministers, men well acquainted with the Gospel themselves, earnest in teaching it to others, and willing to devote themselves entirely to the cure of the souls of their parishioners, and nothing would be more promising than the hope of leavening the whole mass of society in England with the principles of true religion.

The Ecclesiastical Commissioners for England, being now in the receipt of large sums in every year, which it is their duty to distribute to the best advantage in relief of the most pressing wants of the Church, are prepared to make grants towards better provision for the cure of souls in our parishes, on condition that such grants are met by benefactions from other sources.

It rests, therefore, with the inhabitants of the parishes themselves, and of the archdeaconry or diocese in which they are situated, to take the first step towards providing for these wants. The remark of the Apostle seems applicable to us in this respect, "If any provide not for his "own, and specially for those of his own house, "he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an "infidel." We look naturally and justly to the inhabitants of the places where the want is felt, to do what they can to supply it by their own

exertions. If you know by sad experience the evils of the want of proper spiritual superintendence in a parish, because it is too large or too populous for the care of a single minister, or because there is no parsonage house, or because the income of the minister is so small that he is always anxious how to find the means of living, you must do what you can to help yourselves and those who are connected with you, before you ask the help of others. Our landowners, our occupiers of farms or houses, our clergy themselves, the patrons of our benefices, ought to be the first to come forward and do what they can to supply the urgent needs of those in whose spiritual welfare they are interested; and if in any of our parishes, by the goodness of God, such wants are not felt, the law of Christian charity obliges those who have the means to look not only on their own things, but every man also on the things of others. I cannot help regarding the whole diocese in this respect as one body in the Lord, of which "the members should have "the same care one for another; and whether "one member suffer, all the members suffer with "it; or one member be honoured, all the mem-"bers rejoice with it." To supply the spiritual wants of the several parishes in the diocese is a *home* duty, which ought to find ready acknowledgment in the hearts of all who are bound

together in one diocese by a holy tie of brotherhood.

When I regard what has been done in this respect in other dioceses, I cannot help feeling that, whatever has been done in particular parishes by the benevolent exertions of those who are locally interested in them, the inhabitants of the diocese of Worcester upon the whole have not done so much to promote the practical efficiency of the Church in it, as might have been expected from their great resources.

In illustration of this, let me cite the case of the neighbouring diocese of Lichfield, with regard to which I am able to give figures which may be relied upon showing in some degree what has been done in it for the better endowment of poor benefices.

In the distribution of the funds at the disposal of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners which was made in the spring of the present year, it appeared that thirty-one offers of benefactions were made from the diocese of Lichfield, amounting to £19,116. The Commissioners were able to accept twenty of these offers, and made grants to meet them to the amount of £11,943. From the diocese of Worcester only eleven offers were made, amounting to £6,313; the Commissioners accepted five of them, and made grants to meet them to the amount of £3,217.

A comparison of the diocese of Worcester with some other dioceses, in the distribution of the funds of the Commissioners, would show similar results.

The machinery which has been used for the purpose in the diocese of Lichfield is similar to that of our own two Church Extension Societies. There is a Diocesan Church Extension Society, one of the objects of which is the better endowment of benefices under £200 a year. But in addition to the Diocesan Church Extension Society, I am informed that a fund, called the Poor Benefice Fund, has been recently established in each of the three archdeaconries of the diocese. It is intended by the promoters of these funds that £200 should be annually granted out of them to as many benefices under £200 a year as the state of the funds allows, on condition that in each case the grant be met by a benefaction of the same amount from local sources. If the £400 thus raised be carried to the Church Extension Society, the funds of that society allowing it, £200 more will be added to the sum. The £600 can then be offered to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners; and if the benefaction be accepted by them £600 will be added, so that the parish which has raised £200 will have in return £1,200 for the increase of the endowment of its poor living.

I am not prepared to say that it is desirable to establish at once in each of our two archdeaconries a fund having the same simple object of increasing the endowments of poor benefices. Perhaps it will be better at present to try simply to give increased effect to our Church Extension Societies already in existence. I mention these funds chiefly to show what may be done by the inhabitants of a diocese to take full advantage of the help to be obtained from the Ecclesiastical Commissioners. But it cannot be wrong that I should ask you, one and all, my Reverend Brethren, to make known in your several parishes the wants of the diocese in regard to the better endowment of poor livings, and to bring the claims of our Church Extension Societies prominently to the notice of your people. I desire to recommend that a collection be made, after a sermon, in every church of the diocese on one Sunday in every year, at the time which the minister may consider most convenient, in aid of the Church Extension Society for the archdeaconry in which the church is situate. An opportunity will thus be given to every member of every congregation to offer what he can give to this good work. Those who have no silver or gold may give at least their prayers. If help is not wanted in any man's own parish, he may enjoy the luxury of doing good to

others, looking upon himself not as an isolated individual, or a single member of a single congregation, but one of a family bound together in one diocese by a holy tie of brotherhood.

But, though I have asked you to regard in the first instance the tie of brotherhood, of which I speak, as uniting us together in one diocese, I need not say that the bond which joins Christians together is not, in fact, restricted to such narrow limits. The communion of saints is co-extensive with the Church of Christ; and every member of the Church, as such, is entitled in case of need to our sympathy and help. You will not think that I am asking too much if I call your attention also, in addition to our Diocesan Church Extension Societies, to those wider fields for the exercise of Christian love which are to be found in Home and Foreign Missions.

I have already mentioned the town of Birmingham as requiring, in common with other large towns, special measures with regard to Church Extension. There is, in fact, no more serious difficulty with which the Church of England has to deal at the present day than the question of bringing the ministrations of the gospel practically and fully within reach of the masses of people who are collected together in large towns. The parochial system, which is the glory and

boast of our Church, seems almost to break down and to fail in this instance. The size of some of our town parishes is so large, the number of inhabitants in them so great, the provision for the support of the clergy and for accommodation in churches and schools so inadequate, that it seems almost a desperate undertaking for the clergy to administer the Word of Life to those who are nominally under their charge, or even to teach them the elementary principles of Christian faith and practice. Personal communication between the clergyman and his parishioners is in many cases impossible; at least, communication of such frequent and intimate character as is wanted to make him acquainted with their spiritual condition individually, and to give him the opportunity of doing anything effectual to help them. In many of our large towns and widely extended parishes there is real danger lest the people should sink into a state of practical heathenism, because of the insufficiency of the means with which the Church is working. Several excellent societies have been established, and are in active work, to aid the system of our Church in large towns. I need not particularize them further than by saying that their objects may be comprehended under the general name of Home Missions. It would be well if the claims of some one or more of these societies were brought before

the congregation in every church from year to year, so as to excite an interest in the object of Home Missions, and to give every one an opportunity of contributing something to it.

And what I thus say of Home Missions I would say with regard to Foreign Missions also. Let the claims of our excellent Missionary Societies, which are seeking to spread the gospel among our countrymen abroad and among the heathen, be brought at least once a year before the notice of every congregation. I am sure that they who try the experiment will not find the people less disposed to give in aid of Foreign Missions, because they have already contributed something in aid of Home Missions or of our Diocesan Church Extension Societies. It is a remarkable fact, that of the two classes of religious societies, which have for their object Home and Foreign Missions respectively, each class has risen in prosperity at the same time and by the same degrees as the other. The Church Building Society, the Church Pastoral Aid Society, the Additional Curates' Society, the Scripture Readers' Society, have risen and become great together with the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel and the Church Missionary Society. The growth of these two classes of societies has been almost equal. Each seems to act upon and to stimulate the other. I call this fact remark-

able, not as if it ought to excite surprise (for, in truth, when we think about it, it would be strange if it were not so), but because it is a fact worthy to be remarked, and deserves the special attention of all who are called upon to advocate the claims of religious and charitable institutions. There is, in fact, but one root from which spring the efforts made by Christians in aid of all such societies; I mean the root of Christian charity, lying deep in the heart of every one whose soul has been quickened into life by faith in the glorious gospel of our Saviour. And as faith works by love, so the exercise of love reacts on faith. You cannot take a surer way to awaken among your people a personal interest in the gospel than by engaging their sympathy with the labour of those who try to extend the blessings of the gospel, whether among their own countrymen or among the heathen. If the principle of Christian charity be well founded, the more frequently you appeal to it the more readily is the appeal answered. As the Christian follows on to know the Lord, and advances towards ripeness and perfectness of age in Christ, the more quick is his sense of what our Lord expects and requires every Christian to be doing, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature."

If I venture, then, to recommend an organised system of collecting money in every parish for

religious objects, I have regard not only to the want of money for such objects, but also to the means of quickening spiritual life among your people. Christian charity, springing from Christian faith, is twice blessed: it blesses him who gives as well as him who takes. "Give," said our Lord, "and it shall be given unto you; good "measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and "running over, shall men give into your bosom."

In the archdeaconry of Worcester I find that a society was set on foot in the year 1859 with the view of uniting all the parishes of the archdeaconry in a common effort for the promotion of the Missionary operations of the Church at home and abroad. The object of the Missions Aid Association was not to collect money for any new purposes, but to establish a system by which every clerical member of the Association should collect yearly in his parish, either after sermons or otherwise, funds in aid of at least one society for Home purposes (diocesan or general) and likewise of one society for Foreign Missions, the selection being made by himself. I desire to express my hearty approval of this Association, and to recommend the two reports which it has issued to your favourable notice.

I wish that I could ask you, my Reverend Brethren, to receive my congratulations on the result of the long-continued discussion of the

Revised Code of regulations, issued by the Lords of the Committee of the Privy Council on Education.

The discussion itself may be said to have been to a certain extent satisfactory, inasmuch as it showed how deep and widely-spread is the interest felt by our people in the education of the children of the independent poor. It cannot fail, also, eventually to produce good fruit, because it fixed attention upon the principles which ought to govern as well the conduct of the managers of schools intended for such children as the administration of the funds intrusted by Parliament to the Committee of Council for their benefit.

But I fear that the form in which the Revised Code of regulations has at last been issued will have failed to gain the approval of a large number of persons who have devoted much time and thought to the question, and who have brought to the consideration of it the fruit of long-continued experience in the management of schools.

In many places, where the education of the children of the poor has been carried on hitherto successfully, it will be found, I fear, that the maximum grant which a well-conducted school can obtain from the Committee under the present Code is less than what the school has obtained before, and less than sufficient to enable the managers to pay their way. It will be felt,

also, by some that the amount of aid which may be claimed on behalf of scholars in regular attendance for the general good conduct of the school, well and fairly tested, is less than it should have been, in proportion to the sum which may be claimed upon the result of the examination of the scholars in reading, writing and arithmetic.

When the Revised Code was first published in July, 1861, I could not help feeling some alarm, lest, if the regulations of that code were put in force, the element of religious teaching in schools assisted by Parliament would come to be undervalued in comparison with the purely secular elements of reading, writing and arithmetic. I had rejoiced at the language used with regard to the element of religious teaching by the Queen's Commissioners in their very valuable report which was said to be the basis of the new code of regulations. "There is strong "evidence," they say, "that it is the deliberate "opinion of the great majority of persons in this "country that it is desirable to secure the reli-"gious character of popular education;" and again, it is "beyond all doubt, that the great "body of the population are determined that "religion and education must be closely con-"nected." It was satisfactory to find them saying that for this reason among others "the

" leading principles of the present system are " sound, that they have shown themselves well " adapted to the feelings of the country, and " that they ought to be maintained." It was satisfactory, also, to hear from the Vice-President of the Committee of Council on Education, when stating in the House of Commons the intentions of the Committee in framing the Revised Code, that there would be " no proposal " to make any change in the religious character " of the schools." And yet, when the Revised Code was issued, I could not satisfy myself that no such change would follow from it; for, when the assistance to be obtained from the Committee of Council is of such vital importance that schools cannot be kept in existence if it be largely diminished or withdrawn, I think it to be impossible that the chief attention of the managers and teachers should not be devoted to those elements of teaching upon which the grant of the Committee is made to rest. If all the assistance to be derived from the Committee of Council be made to depend upon reading, writing and arithmetic; if the failure of the scholars to pass an examination in any one of these elements of instruction would diminish the grant by one-third, and failure in all three would cause the grant to be withdrawn entirely; then reading, writing and arithmetic, acquired in such a

form as could be tested by examination, must be the main things to which the attention of the teachers would be given. I am sure that great efforts would have been made by the managers of Church of England schools in general to give the prominence which it deserves to the element of religious teaching. But it could not have been expected that such efforts would succeed so well, when the whole weight of the help of the Committee of Council was carried to the side of the secular elements of teaching, as when they derived from that assistance some encouragement and favour.

After careful consideration of much that has been said and written on the subject, I cannot think that such apprehensions were altogether unfounded. The remarks upon the religious element of teaching made by one, who served the Committee of Council for many years as a School Inspector, are entitled to attention. Mr. Grant, the Rector of Hitcham in Suffolk, in a pamphlet entitled "Remarks on the Revised Code," says: —"We may depend upon it that we shall pay "dearly for improvement in the elements, if it "is at the cost of the intelligence, reflection "and mental activity produced under our pre- "sent system, if it comes to be supposed that "reading, writing and arithmetic, constitute "education. And in the injury from the com-

" petition of the elementary subjects, I think
" that religious knowledge will suffer in common
" with all other higher teaching. Those who
" have vindicated the Revised Code from this
" charge have stated that in Church schools the
" examination in religious knowledge stands as
" it did before. And this is true as far as the
" examination itself is concerned; but other cir-
" cumstances are not the same. Before, the
" Inspector's verdict on religious knowledge
" went very far in his estimation of a school.
" This was well known to the teachers; con-
" sequently, there was no point about which
" they took more pains. But, under the Revised
" Code, nothing will be gained by the examina-
" tion being good, provided it escapes censure.
" The teacher's temptation will be to spend his
" time and strength on subjects which will pay,
" and to be content with passing muster in every-
" thing else. He will lose his pride in the excel-
" lence of the religious examination. No doubt
" the clergy may be trusted to take care that
" religious instruction is not neglected; but
" they can hardly expect to do as much with
" the weight of Government influence against
" them, as with it in their favour. The clergy
" cannot teach religious knowledge entirely
" themselves. Many have scarcely leisure for
" school-work at all; many have no aptitude

" for the work or experience in it. It is on " the school teachers we must depend for the " staple of religious teaching; and, conscientious " as I believe them to be, I cannot think they " can be expected to do as much under the new " system as the old."

I have thought it right to take the opportunity, which I now enjoy in the presence of many managers of schools, to mention the apprehensions which I felt, because, though the danger is to some extent removed by the changes which the Revised Code has undergone, the regulations of the present code are not altogether free from it. The course of discussion seemed to show that such danger was not in general sufficiently regarded. Arguments were used in favour of the doctrine, that the secular elements of reading, writing and arithmetic, are all with which the Committee of Council have any real concern; and that, if the money granted by Parliament be distributed on that principle, the element of religious teaching may be left to be cared for by other means. The influence of such arguments may be felt hereafter in the discussions which yet await us; and it is well that the advocates of religious education should be prepared, and be on their guard against them.

But though I think that the new code of regulations is in this respect somewhat liable

to objection, I am far from thinking that, in other respects, it is worse than that for which it has been substituted. It seems to me, for instance, a great improvement upon the former system that all grants in aid henceforth are to be paid directly to the managers of schools, while the salaries of masters certificated after March 31, 1864, and of pupil-teachers admitted after June 30, 1862, are to be left in the discretion of the managers, to be regulated by the laws of supply and demand. The masters and teachers will thus be placed in their proper position of subordination to the managers; and the Committee of Council will be relieved from the care of a number of minute details which required unceasing attention and the employment of expensive and inconvenient machinery.

After all that has been said, however, upon the subject of education, one question remains to be considered, which the Report of the Queen's Commissioners and the discussion on the Revised Code have brought prominently into notice, but which it cannot be said that anything effectual has yet been done to settle. The Royal Commissioners stated it to be one of the chief failures of the system by which the money granted by Parliament was distributed, that it did not touch the districts which most require assistance. The Committee of Council, in issuing the Revised

Code, professed their desire to make the distribution more general; but I think that no one, who has considered the question, can believe that by the new rules this object has been in any way accomplished.

Small parishes and parishes placed under disadvantageous circumstances are unable to profit by the aid offered by the Committee of Council, because they cannot fulfil the conditions upon which the Committee think it right to insist. We are told by the Royal Commissioners that, in the year 1860, 917,255 children were on the books of schools in receipt of annual grants from the Committee of Council. There were also 675,155 children in public schools of the class for which the grants were intended but which derive no annual advantage from them. In private schools, also, it is estimated that there were 573,536 children of the class for which the annual grants are intended, but who derive no benefit from them; so that, on the whole, in round numbers the annual grants in 1860 promoted the education of about 920,000 children, whilst they left unaffected the education of 1,250,000 others of the same class; or, to look at the same thing in another way, the number of unassisted public schools was 15,952, while the number of assisted public schools was only 6,897.

It will be seen from these statements that the evil, for which a remedy is sought, is of large extent. A great number of parishes is altogether shut out from assistance, while their inhabitants contribute, as taxpayers, to the fund out of which the money in aid is taken. And the burden of conducting the education of the poor in such parishes is "mainly supported," say the Commissioners, "by excessive individual "sacrifices on the part of the clergy"; for "it "is extremely difficult," they add, "to maintain "a good school under a master in a population "below five hundred without a very undue pro- "portion of the expense being thrown upon the "clergyman."

It is not easy to see in what way the difficulty may be overcome which stands in the way of extending the assistance of the Parliamentary grant to small and destitute places; but it is obvious, I think, that when attention has been called to it some effort must be made to meet it. A resolution, intended to meet the case in some degree, was moved in the House of Commons in the course of last session, and rejected only by a small majority. There is reason to think that it would have been carried if the House had not felt that the introduction of new matter into the scheme for distributing the Parliamentary grant would have seriously embarrassed the Committee

of Council in their operations after the ample discussion to which the Revised Code had been submitted.

I cannot leave the subject of education without expressing the gratification with which I read the very valuable Report of the Royal Commissioners on the state of popular education in England. Every one who desires to promote the education of the children of the independent poor must rejoice at the facts stated by the Commissioners respecting the progress of popular education in recent years. We may feel honest pride in the number of children now in course of education, in the goodness of the instruction which they receive, in the moral and religious effects of education which have become apparent in the manners and habits of the people. But I cannot refrain from expressing my satisfaction also in the fact that the Church of England has not been wanting in the work of education among the poor. No less than eighty per cent. of the means of such education has been provided by the members of the Church of England. And if the Church of England, as a body, has not been wanting, much less have the ministers of the Church failed to show their sense of the importance of the duty. The exertions made in the cause of education by the clergy are beyond all praise. Not to speak of time and thought

given abundantly to the management of schools, their actual contributions in money far exceed those of any other class of men. "It has been "repeatedly noticed by the school inspectors," say the Royal Commissioners, "and it is our "duty to state that, as a class, the landowners, "especially those who are non-resident (though "there are many honourable exceptions), do not "do their duty in the support of popular educa- "tion; and that they allow others, who are far "less able to afford it, to bear the burden of "their neglect." It appeared from a calculation made by one of the Assistant Commissioners that out of the subscriptions raised for the support of 168 schools in rural districts, while the average contribution of a landowner was £5 6*s.*, and that of an occupier 18*s.* 6*d.*, that of a clergyman was no less than £10 10*s.* "The heaviness of "the burden borne by the clergy," say the Commissioners, "is imperfectly indicated even by "such figures as these. It frequently happens "that the clergyman considers himself responsible "for whatever is necessary to make the accounts "of the school balance; and thus he places "himself towards the school in the position of "a banker, who allows a customer habitually to "overdraw his account. He is the man who "most feels the mischief arising from want of "education. Between him and the ignorant

" part of his adult parishioners there is a chasm;
" they will not come near him, and do not under-
" stand him, if he forces himself upon them.
" He feels that the only means of improvement
" is the education of the young; and he knows
" that only a small part of the necessary expense
" can be extracted from the parents. He begs
" from his neighbours; he begs from the land-
" owners: if he fails to persuade them to take
" their fair share of the burden, he begs from
" his friends and even from strangers, and at
" last submits most meritoriously and most gene-
" rously to bear not only his own proportion
" of the expense, but also that which ought to
" be borne by others."

I have read this statement, my Reverend Brethren, with unfeigned joy and pride. You know well enough how true it is. I see everywhere in the diocese of Worcester proofs of its accuracy. I cannot refrain from expressing to you my gratification, and begging you to accept my most cordial thanks.

I desire, also, to take this opportunity of expressing my thanks to the clergy for the communications which I received from them, through the Rural Deans, respecting the Bill which was brought into the House of Lords last year for the amendment of the law relating to Ecclesiastical Dilapidations. I was enabled to

obtain from the promoters of the Bill the consideration of many valuable suggestions which I thus received. A Bill, improved in many respects, was presented to the House of Lords by the Archbishop of Canterbury at an early period of this year's session, and was referred to a select committee. But in consequence of the subsequent illness of the Archbishop and the late period at which the Bill was returned by the committee, no further proceedings were taken on it. It must be considered, however, that by what has taken place some effectual progress has been made towards a settlement of this important matter.

The question of altering the law with regard to Church-rates has been before the Houses of Parliament almost uninterruptedly for a period of thirty years. I venture to mention it, not with the view of saying anything that may tend to the solution of a much-vexed question, but simply to express my satisfaction that, notwithstanding many proposals made, no solution of the question has been arrived at yet, and my earnest hope that nothing may be adopted in the way of a compromise between opposite opinions without due deliberation. The mere facts, that an alteration of the law regarding Church-rates has been urged with so much pertinacity on the one hand and resisted with so much determina-

tion on the other, that so many different proposals for a settlement of the controversy have been made, and that none of them has received the approbation of the Legislature, are enough to show that the questions involved at present are of much deeper significance than a hasty consideration of them seems to indicate. Those who wish to abolish Church-rates and those who strive to retain and to enforce them are alike aware that something more is in question than the means of providing for the maintenance and repair of churches, and for the expenses of the celebration of Divine Service; that more important matters are, in fact, at stake, which touch the connexion of the Church of England with the State and the existence of a National Ecclesiastical Establishment. In this point of view it is not too much to say that some of the most important principles are involved in the issue which can ask the attention of good patriots and Christians.

No one can have observed with care the action of the Church of England during the time for which the question of Church-rates has been in agitation, and have failed to see how much additional hold she has gained during that time upon the conscientious convictions and affections of the people. In the diocese of Worcester, as in other dioceses, the fact has become abundantly

evident in the improved tone of manners and habits of society, in the increased number and activity of our associations for religious objects, in the erection and restoration of churches, in the growing regard of our people for the ordinances and services of religious worship. We are glad to know that the causes which have produced this happy result are still in operation, and we do not doubt that, with the blessing of God, the Church of England will continue to go on and prosper, binding the hearts of our people to her and securing their affections because they are satisfied that she is built upon the rock of truth.

It is, then, to me, at least, a cause of gratitude and joy that we have escaped a settlement of the question of Church-rates in the way of compromise before the Church of England, reviving from the torpor by which she had been long oppressed, was able to show the strength of her claims upon the respect and affections of the people. If the ministers of our Church will go on in the way in which I am thankful to say that, as a body, they are walking, showing forth the value of her ministrations in their personal conduct and in their teaching; if the wisdom of our legislators can find the means of giving to our Church a wider scope and greater practical efficiency; and if the facilities which the law may give are supported by the liberal contributions of those

who have the means of giving; if we can thus succeed in laying a deeper and wider foundation for attachment to our Church, in setting up her towers, in lengthening her cords, and strengthening her stakes; if we can satisfy our people that the principle of a National Established Church is good, that the connexion of the Church of England with the State is of essential advantage to both bodies, I cannot help thinking that the question of Church-rates will sink down into its just proportions as a simple question how to provide funds for the maintenance of sacred buildings, and for the expenses of the celebration of Divine worship. If we can reduce the question to this, there will be no difficulty in settling it; men will press forward and give gladly of their abundance, aye and out of their deep poverty, to pay the trifling cost of ministrations, from which they feel that they reap the benefit of inestimable blessings.

If this view be correct, the true way to fight the battle of Church-rates is to try to make the majorities in our vestries good Churchmen. Whatever tends to enlarge the bounds of the Church and to strengthen her hold on the affections of the people is a step gained for the maintenance of Church-rates. In directing our efforts to this end, let us cherish a good hope of success; at least, let us not say that our efforts

have failed until we have continued them a little longer. The time is yet short since the better energies of the Church of England have been roused, and a due sense of their responsibility with regard to Church extension awakened in her members. Much will depend, as I have said, on the lives and labours of the clergy, by which our congregations may be brought to feel the value of the ordinances of the Church, and to hunger and thirst for the bread and water of life which are to be found in them. But something, also, seems to be required in the way of legislation to supply defects, to remove impediments, to promote the practical efficiency of the Church, and, if possible, to extend her influence over some who hold themselves aloof.

There is no more serious question at the present day for the consideration of those who feel the responsibility of their position as members of a National Established Church than to determine whether any, and, if any, what, changes are required in the laws by which our Church is governed, and by what means such changes may be best arranged and settled. Are there matters in the system of our Church which call for alteration and amendment, not with the view of attracting those who are now without our pale, but because in our own good judgment such alteration and amendment are

desirable? Are there, again, other matters, in which, though we may well rest satisfied with what we have, yet, when we look at the position of a National Established Church and the scruples of some who at present dissent from her, alterations may be safely made with the view of comprehending some who are without, so as to leave them without excuse if they still continue to refuse communion with us? Is it possible, without any sacrifice of principle, to make the Church of England, in a greater degree than she is at present, what we desire her to be, the Church of a united people? Are we, who readily give our unfeigned assent and consent to all that she prescribes and teaches, justified in resisting every change which may be desired by those who conscientiously dissent from her discipline or doctrine? If it is unreasonable to expect to satisfy those who require nothing less than the separation of Church and State, is it hopeless to remove some grounds of scruple from the minds of good and earnest men, who sincerely desire that the State should be blessed by its connexion with the Church, and that the Church should be supported in her high vocation by the material aid which the secular arm can give her? If we try to remove honest scruples in one direction, shall we by so doing excite fresh difficulties in another? If by giving

greater freedom and enlarging her bounds on one side our Church be made to comprehend some who now stand aloof from her, is it certain that we shall not, by that very process, draw closer her limits on the other side and drive away from her communion some who are now attached and faithful members? If it is hopeless, as it is by the confession of all, to extinguish dissent entirely, so to frame our laws and formularies and tests of membership as to satisfy the judgment of every thinking man, are we now in possession of that precise form which, having regard to the maintenance of essential truth, we think to be fitted for comprehending the greatest number? Is it our best course, after all that can be said, to rest content with what we have, tolerating all dissent, respecting and loving in each particular form of dissent what is worthy of respect and love in it; but holding fast our own form of sound words, lest, in the attempt to alter it, we should risk the loss of a clear enunciation of truth and the creation of fresh divisions in a body which, whatever the theoretical anomalies of its constitution and laws, does, in fact, comprehend a large number of men of independent minds, who look at religious truth from different points of view?

I cordially agree with those who think that the consideration of such questions as I have

mentioned ought to be approached with great solemnity and caution. But they are questions which the circumstances of the present time loudly call on us to answer; and no one can avoid returning to them some answer, at least in his own mind, who regards the preservation and the extension of the Church of England as a solemn trust committed to her members.

And if the need of Church legislation be admitted, as I presume it must be by every one in regard to some matters, a question of no less difficulty remains as to the means by which such legislation may be best accomplished. I desire to speak with all respect of the labours of those who have taken an active part in reviving the sessions of Convocation and in discussing the various questions which have been brought forward in it. But, whatever the value of Convocation as giving opportunity for discussion and debate (though many will entertain grave doubts as to the value of such an opportunity, when discussion and debate can lead to no practical result and every member of the body may travel into whatever field he pleases), it cannot be maintained, I think, that the Houses of Convocation supply the machinery for legislation which can be used in the present day with practical advantage. Our occasions require something more simple, more efficient, more fully representing

the National Established Church, more deserving and more possessing the confidence of the people, than the cumbrous machinery of several independent Provincial Convocations.

During the present session of Parliament an instance has been given, one among many which are constantly recurring, of the need of some system better than what we have at present for conducting the legislation which affects the interests of the Church and of the clergy. A Bill was brought into the House of Commons (which, however, was rejected upon the third reading) for the relief of persons in Holy Orders declaring their dissent from the doctrine or discipline of the Church of England. It seems obvious that some opportunity ought to be given to the clergy of taking part in the discussion of such a proposal, and in the preparation of a measure for altering the law in matters by which their interests are peculiarly affected. The clergy, however, being excluded from the House of Commons, no such participation is possible. The measure is originated and discussed and settled by laymen until it reaches the House of Lords, where the presence of the Bishops gives the only security which the country can have (and that at too late a stage of proceeding) that the attention of the clergy has been directed to it. I am far from claiming for the

clergy the exclusive prerogative of legislation in Church matters. On the contrary, I think that in all such legislation the co-operation of laymen is very much to be desired. But I cannot be satisfied that measures affecting the Church and the clergy in very important points should be dealt with by the Legislature without opportunity previously given for their discussion and preparation by some body in which the clergy should hold a place of influence and power.

Before leaving the subject of Church legislation I may take the opportunity of calling attention to a Bill which was brought into the House of Lords in the present session of Parliament, entitled, An Act to amend the Acts of Uniformity. The main object of the Bill was to relieve persons put into any ecclesiastical benefice from the necessity of declaring their assent and consent to the Book of Common Prayer. The Bill recited the declaration also imposed by the Acts of Uniformity, not only upon persons put into any ecclesiastical benefice but upon persons licensed to any cure of souls whatever, that they will conform to the Liturgy of the United Church of England and Ireland as it is now by law established; and proposed to enact that nothing in the Act should affect any provision of the said Acts of Uniformity requiring any person to subscribe the said declaration, or to procure a certificate

that he had so subscribed, or to publicly read such certificate and declaration.

The effect of the proposed law would thus have been to sanction by the authority of Parliament a distinction between the outward public use of the Prayer Book by the beneficed clergy and their private opinions and belief respecting it. It would have gone to weaken the authority of the Prayer Book as a test and standard of doctrine, and to destroy the confidence of the people that the teaching of their appointed ministers would be in hearty and conscientious agreement with the Liturgy they use.

It would have been cause for great regret if the proposed Bill had received the sanction of the Legislature. It is true that, independently of the Acts of Uniformity, the Canons of our Church require that every person, on his admission to Holy Orders as well as on his being licensed to any cure, should willingly and from his heart subscribe before the Bishop a declaration that the Book of Common Prayer and of Ordering of Bishops, Priests and Deacons, containeth in it nothing contrary to the Word of God, and that it may lawfully so be used, and that he himself will use the form in the said Book prescribed in public prayer and administration of the Sacraments and none other. But, not to dwell upon the loss which would be sustained by the

Church upon the withdrawal of the Parliamentary recognition of the binding force of our Liturgy upon the clergy, it should be observed that the declaration which the Bill proposed to abolish is required to be made, not before the Bishop but "openly and publicly in church before the congregation;" and upon an occasion when the person making it is not about to undertake the temporary cure of souls as a stipendiary curate, but to enter upon a benefice with a life-long tenure. I cannot think it inexpedient or unnecessary that, whatever pledge may have been taken at other times, upon such an occasion at least as the admission to a benefice the newly appointed minister of a parish should be called upon to express openly in the face of the congregation among whom he is to minister his assent to the substance of the Liturgy which he is about to bind himself to use.

It may be that the form of words in which that assent is required to be given is justly open to objection. The times in which we live are happily different from those in which it was framed; and if we had to compose the form anew, we might find words sufficient for the purpose yet less exacting than the expression of "unfeigned assent and consent to all and "everything contained and prescribed in and by "the Book of Common Prayer."

If, however, good men feel conscientious scruples, it is not easy to see how they could have been removed by the proposed Act, unless it had been followed up by other measures. No high-minded, honest minister of the Church could declare his intention of conforming to the Liturgy, unless he could also give to it his unfeigned assent. His scruples as to the truth of the substance of the book, or as to the rules prescribed for the use of it, could not have been removed by the withdrawal of one declaration, while the other was allowed to remain in force.

It is said, for example, that some of the Rubrics or rules prescribed by the Book of Common Prayer are obsolete and impracticable. Conscientious men have been troubled by scruples, whether they ought to express their unfeigned assent or promise to conform to a book in which such rules are found. It would give little relief to such persons to be told that they need no longer express their assent to what is prescribed, but that they must still promise to conform to what they believe to be inexpedient or impracticable. I acknowledge, in its full force, the difficulty which arises from the existence of such rules, though I believe that difficulty to have been in many cases much exaggerated. It applies equally to both the declarations imposed by the Acts of Uniformity. There is no way, as far as

I can see, of getting rid of that difficulty, other than by revising and altering the rules upon which the difficulty arises. No other course can bring the relief which is desired and make those who have felt the difficulty, whether among the ministers of our Church or among those who are about to enter into the ministry, not only ready to declare their intention of conforming to the Liturgy, but glad to express their unfeigned assent to it also. It is much to be wished, as I have already ventured to remark, that some means should be found of bringing about in a safe and satisfactory manner such changes in the matters to which I have referred, as the long disuse of Church legislation may have made desirable.

The Bill to which I have called your attention was withdrawn from Parliament on the motion for its second reading, on the ground that more time than the promoters of it had given was wanted for the consideration of a measure of so much importance. There was, however, a general understanding that the matter would not be allowed to sleep, and there can be no doubt that some of the questions to which the presentation of the Bill gave rise will be brought forward again and pressed upon the Legislature for solution. In the mean time it was considered that what had been said would have the

effect of calling the attention of the country to the subject and draw forth the expression of matured opinion on it.

I have thought it right, my Reverend Brethren and my Brethren of the Laity, to take advantage of the opportunity, which I now enjoy, to express my opinion on some of the many matters of interest which occupy our attention at the present time. The remarks which I have made may meet with more or less acceptance among you; but, whatever the result in this respect of the words that I have spoken, let me be permitted, before we separate, to suggest one thought for our reflections, in which I have no doubt that all of us will cordially agree. Meetings such as these ought not to be allowed to pass away as mere formal assemblies for the transaction of ordinary business. We ought to use the precious opportunity to encourage one another in the way of godliness, to strengthen ourselves against discouragements, to gather fresh resolution from mutual counsel and sympathy to go on our way rejoicing, prepared to do our duty in that state of life into which it has pleased God to call us.

"*Occupy till I come*" is the watchword and motto which I would ask you to adopt, and the recollection of which I would try to leave behind me. How full the mind of St. Paul was of this idea we may see plainly in his writings. "Watch

"thou in all things," is his counsel to Timothy, "endure afflictions, do the work of an Evange- "list, make full proof of thy ministry. For I "am now ready to be offered, and the time of my "departure is at hand; I have fought a good "fight, I have finished my course, I have kept "the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me "a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the "righteous Judge, shall give me at that day; "and not to me only, but unto all them also that "love his appearing." "Fight the good fight of "faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou "art also called, and hast professed a good pro- "fession before many witnesses. I give thee "charge in the sight of God, who quickeneth all "things, and before Jesus Christ, who before "Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession, that "thou keep this commandment, without spot, "unrebukable, until the appearing of our Lord "Jesus Christ." "The grace of God that bringeth "salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching "us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, "we should live soberly, righteously and godly "in this present world, looking for that blessed "hope and the glorious appearing of the great "God and our Saviour, Jesus Christ."

"*Occupy till I come.*" The thoughts which the words suggest are applicable to all of us, whether

lay members or ministers, whether office-bearers in the Church of Christ or simply members of the congregation, who have come to witness our meeting and to join in the holy service by which we try to draw down a blessing on it. We are, one and all, occupying some post of duty; one and all intrusted with talents to be employed in our Master's service, whether those talents lie in the possession of rank and office, or simply in our natural gifts and endowments, by which we exercise influence over others in the ordinary intercourse of life. Our trust is only for a time; our occupation will be at an end when our Lord comes, and shall command His servants to be called unto Him that He may know "how much every man shall have gained by trading." We know not how soon that account may be called for; the day of our death is to us practically the day of our Lord's coming; and it is the merest truism to say that our life in every case is but as a vapour, so soon passeth it away and we are gone. "There is no device or knowledge in the grave whither thou goest."

By us, my Reverend Brethren, who are intrusted with the office of ministering in the Church of Christ, the value of these considerations cannot be overrated. The coming of our Lord Jesus Christ is an event to which we ought to be

looking forward with unspeakable joy. Let us try to keep it constantly in view as we occupy the office to which His grace has called us.

The time would not allow me, even if I wished to do it, to represent to you the views which I hold of your duties and my own with reference to one another, and with reference to the laity among whom we are called to minister. Suffice it to say that I regard the tie which binds together a bishop and his clergy, or the clergy with one another, as a bond of union, one of the most holy and agreeable of which we have experience. If you and I are earnest in our work, we shall find in mutual respect and sympathy a source of strength and confidence and most abundant joy. "There are diversities of gifts, "but the same spirit; and there are differences "of administrations, but the same Lord; and "there are diversities of operations, but it is the "same God, which worketh all in all." There should be no schism in such a body; but "the "members should have the same care one for "another; and whether one member suffer, all "the members suffer with it; or one member be "honoured, all the members rejoice with it."

Differences of opinion there must be in every society of earnest thoughtful men, or there could be no vigour of life in independent action. If

we tried to exclude from our intercourse and communion every one who did not hold exactly the same opinion as ourselves upon matters of religious interest, our society would degenerate into a narrow sect, and those who shut themselves up within it would be in danger of falling a prey to the sin of spiritual pride. There is room enough in the Church of England for many differences of opinion, while we all hold the head; there is nothing in such differences of opinion which ought to prevent those in whom they are found from acting together in one holy bond of brotherhood, all loving our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, all trying to prepare and make ready His way by turning the hearts of the disobedient to the wisdom of the just. If we look only at our differences of opinion, and not at the many points in which we cordially agree and at the great work, with which we are put in charge, of fighting against the common enemy, we shall waste our time and strength in fretting against each other, and expose ourselves to the just condemnation of unprofitable servants. You and I, my Reverend Brethren, can only hope to do our work effectually by encouraging and helping one another, by endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, by joining together in all good works with one heart and one soul,

each and all of us living close to God, praying without ceasing, acting always under the guidance of the Holy Spirit in thought, word and work, for "it is not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts."

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A CHARGE

DELIVERED TO

THE CLERGY AND CHURCHWARDENS

OF THE

DIOCESE OF WORCESTER,

BY

HENRY, LORD BISHOP OF WORCESTER,

AT HIS VISITATION IN JUNE, 1865.

London,
RIVINGTONS, WATERLOO PLACE;
HIGH STREET, Oxford. | TRINITY STREET, Cambridge.
1865.

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A

CHARGE,

&c.

My Reverend Brethren of the Clergy,
and my Brethren of the Laity,

If upon the last occasion when I had the pleasure of meeting you in Visitation I had reason to express my gratification at the cordial reception with which I had been welcomed to the diocese, I have equal reason now to express the same feeling in considering the kind support by which I have been encouraged for the past three years. I should be unworthy of your kindness if I did not use the opportunity which is now given me to assure you of my hearty thanks.

It is not possible that any one, who is earnest in doing the work of a bishop, should fail to see, upon the review of three years which a Visitation obliges him to take, that he has many shortcomings to mourn over, much need of forgiveness

from the Master whom he serves, much need of a kind interpretation of his acts and of allowance for failings from his brethren among whom he has to exercise his office. Such reviews of the past cannot be altogether free from regret and pain; but their proper and wholesome effect is to stir up those who undertake them to greater diligence and singleness of heart for work in future. I pray God to forgive me all my negligences and ignorances, and to endue me with the grace of His Holy Spirit, that I may give up myself more to His service for the good of His Church and the advancement of His glory.

And yet, when I look back upon the past three years, I am thankful to remember that they have been blessed to me as a season of abundant joy. I have had greater pleasure than I can express in the work that God has given me to do, and I feel that I can never be grateful enough to Him for the opportunity of such work, and for the measure of health and strength which has enabled me to fulfil the ordinary requirements of a large and populous diocese in regular course and order.

I have the most lively sympathy with the clergy, and with those of the laity who are labouring with them in their several parishes to set forward the salvation of men; their successes and their discouragements are all matters of interest to me.

I have no greater gratification than to be able to assist any by counsel in difficulties, or to turn to profitable account for their benefit information and experience gathered from the wide area over which the labours of a bishop reach.

The constantly recurring services in which I am called to take part—of Confirmation, of Ordination, of the Consecration of Churches—bring seasons of spiritual edification and joy, which strengthen the bonds of union between a bishop and the clergy and laity of his diocese by a firmer tie than any other means can fasten. They go far to accomplish, what every occasion of common public worship effects in some degree, the binding together of faithful men in one holy fellowship, the foretaste and the pledge of the communion of saints in heaven.

In the relations of business, into which I have been brought with other persons, it has been my study to respect the legal rights of all men. As we have the happiness of living under the protection of well-defined laws, I am satisfied that there is no sufficient security, either for the happiness of individuals or for the good order of society, unless every one tries to make himself acquainted with the legal limits which define his own authority and his own rights and duties, whether in ecclesiastical or in civil things, and

conscientiously determines to keep himself within them.

To you, gentlemen Churchwardens, I desire to return my thanks for the services that you are rendering in an important and responsible and sometimes anxious office. You are called upon to act in a twofold character, inasmuch as you are officers of the Bishop, as well as of the parishes in which you serve; and you have rights and duties belonging to each capacity.

It will not be out of place at a time when much work is being done in the refitting and repair of churches, if you allow me to remind you of what I said at the last Visitation, that, strictly speaking, no alteration can be made legally in the fabric, furniture or ornaments of a church without the consent of the Bishop, which consent is expressed by a faculty issued from the Chancellor's Court.

Information which has reached me from several parishes in the diocese leads me also to call your special attention to the law, which forbids entirely the sale of pews in churches. The prohibition of the law extends also to the letting of pews for hire, except in the case of some modern churches, in which, owing to the want of endowments for the ministers, special authority has been given for it. "Pews in a church," said Sir John Nicholl, stating

the general law on the subject, "belong to the parish for the use of the inhabitants, and cannot be sold or let without a special Act of Parliament." It has been decided that the Bishop's Court itself cannot give power to sell pews, even though such power were not only assented to, but prayed for by the minister and churchwardens and vestry of a parish. All bargains between private individuals for the sale or hire of pews are against the law. No seat in a church can be sold, nor can rent for it be taken legally by any person for his private profit. With the exception of the very rare instances of pews held by right of prescription or of a faculty from the Bishop's Court, all the seats in a church are at the disposal of the churchwardens as officers of the Bishop. It is their duty to make the most of the available space, and to encourage all classes of the parishioners to come to church by assigning to the regular attendants severally, as far as the capacity of the church allows, places in which they may sit, stand or kneel as the order of Divine service requires. Any unnecessary or arbitrary disturbance of the parishioners in places which have been so assigned would form good ground of complaint against the churchwardens to the Bishop.

In considering the question of the frequency of Ordinations it appears that the convenience of the Clergy would be best consulted by appointing an

Ordination to be held at every one of the four Ember seasons. The interval of six months, which must occur otherwise at some part of every year between two successive Ordinations, has been found to occasion difficulties which could not be overcome without the unsatisfactory expedient of Letters Dimissory. I have made arrangements, therefore, for holding an Ordination in some part of the diocese at every one of the four Ember seasons.

I fear that the scarcity of applications for admission into Holy Orders from well-educated candidates continues to be the cause of inconvenience to the Clergy. I cannot think, however, that the evil is of more than temporary character. Among the measures which may tend to cure it may be mentioned perhaps with confidence the steps taken to improve the condition of poor benefices by increased endowments. If this work can be accomplished, as its sanguine supporters anticipate, parents will no longer have the reason, which now, alas! is too well founded in the extreme poverty of some of our benefices, for dissuading their children from adopting a profession which does not hold out to them the hope of supplying the means of living. If this difficulty could be removed, I cannot think that we should continue to be embarrassed by the want of well-prepared candidates for an office which, apart from other considerations, ought to attract the exertions of the most highly-gifted minds by the

opportunity which it gives of exercising influence for the highest ends over the minds and hearts of others. I am sure that at no time in the history of our country have the just claims of the Clergy to such influence been more readily admitted by the intelligent and good among our laity, nor their persons and their work more universally held in honour.

The returns made by the churchwardens of the several parishes show that in some of them the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper is administered less frequently than is desirable. My Reverend Brethren will allow me to entreat those among them in whose parishes this defect is found to consider the value and necessity of the Holy Communion as well for their own souls as for the souls of the people whom they have in charge. Whatever difference in opinion there may be among us respecting the use of rites and ceremonies in the celebration of Divine worship, some of us, perhaps, laying upon them undue stress, while others do not regard sufficiently the effect of well-ordered forms of devotion upon the hearts and minds of the worshippers, there is happily no difference among us respecting the necessary use of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper according to the simple form which our Church provides for its administration, nor respecting its efficacy in strengthening and refreshing the souls of the faithful. I will venture

to express an opinion that there is no parish in the diocese where the minister ought to deprive himself and his parishioners of the opportunity of receiving the Holy Communion at least twelve times a year.

When I last addressed the Clergy and Churchwardens of the diocese, the Church Extension Society for the Archdeaconry of Worcester had been recently established. The first promises of support were encouraging; but I regret to say that the funds with which the Society has been entrusted have not been at all adequate to the objects which it has in view. The work, which was undertaken then for the first time in the Archdeaconry, of gathering contributions into a general fund to aid local efforts in drawing out grants from the Ecclesiastical Commissioners for the augmentation of poor benefices has made but little progress, very few parishes having shown any sense of the urgency of the work by church collections or Associations for the purpose. While, however, the help which the Society has been able to give to poor benefices is small, our hopes have been encouraged, and I trust that our exertions will be stimulated by several instances of private liberality, among which I mention with pride and pleasure the gift of two thousand pounds by an honoured citizen of Worcester towards the better endowment of the rectory of St. Nicholas in that city.

In the Archdeaconry of Coventry I rejoice to say

that an effort has been made under favourable auspices to aid the Church Extension Society of that Archdeaconry to put the ministrations of the Clergy there upon a better footing by the institution of an Association for the augmentation of the endowments of poor benefices.

The inhabitants of the town of Birmingham have been moved to take in hand the relief of the spiritual destitution which prevails there by the institution of a Church Extension Society, of which the main objects are the building and endowment of new churches and the endowment of churches already existing in the borough. Owing to local difficulties, which have exercised an adverse influence, the support given to the Society has not been yet adequate to the magnitude and necessity of the work, or worthy of the great resources of that flourishing community. The Committee, to whom the management of the funds is entrusted, will persevere, however, under discouragements, praying that God will so bless their efforts to administer the trust placed in them with impartiality and prudence, that they may win confidence and support for a Society which aims at objects of undoubted excellence.

I rejoice that in the diocese of Worcester some proof at least has thus been given that we are not insensible or indifferent to what I will venture to call the two great wants, above all others, of

the Church of England at the present time; I mean the augmentation of the endowments of poor benefices, and the extension of the ministrations of the Church in large and populous places.

We have great encouragement in making efforts for the relief of these two great wants by the application to them of funds at the disposal of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners. In large and populous towns the Commissioners offer endowments for the ministers of new churches, not indeed of large amount but sufficient for the uses of self-denying men; and we are thus encouraged to form districts out of large parishes and to build churches in them, to which we may invite the people free from the burden of pew-rents, by the necessity for which, in lack of endowments, the hearts of the supporters of church extension have been hitherto discouraged. The Commissioners offer, also, grants for the augmentation of the endowments of poor benefices to meet benefactions from any individual, or body of contributors, or society, reserving to themselves the right of giving priority in selecting cases to those which, having regard to income, population, and area, or any of them, shall appear to be the most necessitous.

I thought it to be my duty in the spring of the year to address a letter to every beneficed clergyman in the diocese, urging him to move his parishioners regularly and systematically in the

course of every year by a collection in church to help us to take advantage of these offers of the Commissioners. I will not repeat here the arguments that I used in that letter, but content myself with calling attention to it and begging for it the favourable consideration of the clergy.

It will not be out of place here to mention the Act which was passed by Parliament in 1863, on the motion of the Lord Chancellor, for the augmentation of poor benefices. The proposal, to which the Act gave effect, of selling the advowsons of poor benefices in the gift of the Lord Chancellor and applying the purchase-money to the better endowment of them, was first made by the Royal Commissioners for the subdivision of parishes in their Report of May 3, 1850. From the published returns of sales effected under the Act it appears that the results of the measure have been highly satisfactory. The Royal Commissioners in their Report expressed an opinion that the example so set would probably be followed to some extent by public bodies and private patrons, so that eventually "a vast number of parishes, now almost without religious instruction for want of an adequate endowment, might be brought within the regular ministrations of the Church." Is it too much to expect that this hope may yet in some degree be realized?

In reviewing the last three years one of the

most gratifying subjects of recollection is furnished by the large number of instances in which I have been called to attend the consecration of new churches, or the re-opening of old churches after extensive restoration and improvement. Not to speak of the work in progress in the Cathedral of Worcester, for which a large sum has been gathered in the diocese in aid of the liberal contributions of the Dean and Chapter; a work which may be said to have succeeded already in bringing into view the beauties of the building and its adaptation to the services of public worship, far beyond our expectation; not to speak, also, of the church at Sherborne in the county of Warwick, a model of good taste of which this age may well be proud, built entirely at the cost of a lady, who delights in setting an example of good by honouring the Lord with her substance; not to speak, I say, of remarkable instances like these, I have had the gratification of witnessing in every part of the diocese works of church restoration and improvement, done not in the way in which at no distant date our churches were disfigured by those who undertook to mend them, but in a pure taste and with solid materials, such as our fathers of old delighted to use when they sought to honour God, who gave them all things, and the Saviour who redeemed them.

I rejoice at this earnest and wide-spread effort to set up the houses of God in our land, because

I see in it a sign of the increase of religion and piety. Our people are setting greater value on the ministrations of the Clergy. Their judgment is satisfied that our Church is worthy of support. They are willing to deny themselves, that they may have wherewith to show their devotion to it.

When I set myself to inquire into the causes of this increase of affection for the Church, I cannot hesitate to ascribe a large measure of it to the blessing of God upon the zeal and efficiency of the ministrations of the clergy. Men have learned to love the Gospel and the Church by which the Gospel is administered, not because the ministers of the Church have been forward in talking about it and asserting their claims in popular assemblies or in meetings of debate, by whatever name they may be called, but because they have laboured earnestly in quiet, every one within the limits of his appointed cure, bringing home by teaching and by example to the hearts of the people among whom they serve the elevating principles of conduct and the consolations which we seek in vain elsewhere. "The Church of England," wrote the late Professor Blunt of Cambridge, "must now mainly look for its safety to the combination of learning, discretion and zeal in the clergy. It is no longer the Church of extreme privilege, perhaps it continued so too long. It can no longer afford to rely for support

on Prince or Premier or Legislature or law; but must learn to find its security, under God, in the breadth of its basis, in the sympathies it can awake and keep alive in the mass of the population, and the lodgment it can establish in the affections of the nation at large by the virtue which is manifestly perceived to go out of it. I doubt not," he proceeds, "that its intrinsic excellence is such that, when developed by a Clergy more and more devoted to their calling, as they are becoming every day, it will put forth powers far beyond any we have even yet seen it exerting; and that, if it is spared until there has been time for effecting this, it will stand as upon a rock."

In the remarks which I addressed to the Clergy and Churchwardens at the last Visitation I called attention to a Bill which had been then recently brought into the House of Lords for amending the Act of Uniformity by relieving persons put into any ecclesiastical benefice from the necessity of declaring their assent and consent to the Book of Common Prayer.

I expressed my satisfaction that the Bill was afterwards withdrawn, because it appeared to me that the proposed law would have destroyed the recognition by Parliament of the authority of our Prayer Book as a test and standard of doctrine, and would have allowed a distinction between the

outward public use of the Liturgy by our beneficed clergy, and their private opinion and belief respecting it.

A Royal Commission has been appointed since to consider and revise the various forms of subscription and declaration required to be made by the Clergy; and it is satisfactory to find from the published Report of the Commissioners that they recommend a declaration of assent to the Book of Common Prayer, which expresses clearly belief in the doctrine therein set forth as agreeable to the Word of God; and that they also recommend the declaration to be made openly in church on the first occasion of officiating.

If these recommendations are adopted by Parliament, as it is proposed, the two main points will be secured, for which our existing laws provide, viz. the authority of the Prayer Book as a test and standard of doctrine, and the assurance of the people that the teaching of their appointed ministers will be in agreement with the Liturgy they use.

It is, no doubt, of some advantage that the forms of subscription and declaration imposed upon the Clergy should be simplified, and the manner of imposing them improved; but I confess myself at a loss to see what substantial relief the proposed changes will bring to those who expressed dissatisfaction with our existing forms. It is certain that

no adequate relief will be acknowledged by many, who were loud in urging alteration, and who did not conceal their wish that all forms of subscription and declaration alike should be abolished, or at least that a promise to use the Prayer Book in public ministrations should be held sufficient.

I cannot divest myself of apprehension that the process of making the proposed changes will be found to involve difficulty and risk out of all proportion to the good to be obtained, and that without due care a precedent may be set in a change of small importance which will be full of evil when applied to greater matters.

I regret to say that cases of difficulty in the use of the Burial Service continue to be brought before me. It does not appear that such cases occur to many persons or to any person at many times; but the instances, in which I have been asked for advice, are described as involving exceeding pain.

Men actuated by high practical views of truth and piety are sometimes sorely tried by having to choose between disobedience to the law on one hand, and on the other the use of solemn words in public upon the most affecting of all occasions of Divine service in cases where it is felt that the words cannot be applied with justice.

However small the number of such cases of difficulty may be, the pain thereby caused to the clergy and the scandal brought upon the use of

our forms of service require that some effort should be made to bring relief as far as possible.

The difficulty, indeed, cannot be made to vanish entirely. It is to some extent inherent in the constitution of a society in which the tares and the wheat are allowed to grow together until the harvest. So long as the net of the kingdom of heaven is spread, as our Lord teaches us, to gather of every kind, good and bad alike, we must expect to find persons, outwardly honoured with the name of Christians, yet over whom it is not easy for earnest-minded men to express in words of joy the hope that when they departed this life they rested in Christ for ever.

But, if the difficulty cannot be removed, at least it may be diminished so as to bring substantial relief to many, not by lowering the general high spiritual tone of our service, which no one values more than I do, but by following the course recommended by the Royal Commissioners in 1689 and divesting some parts of the service of their necessary immediate application to the individual person buried.

I know that this remedy, which appears to me to promise the only practicable relief, is disapproved by many as being worse than the evil which it is proposed to lessen; partly from what I cannot help thinking an exaggerated and unreasonable apprehension of the mischief that would follow from

any alteration of the Prayer Book ; and partly from a disinclination, with which I profess entire concurrence, to lose the opportunity of using the comforting words to which I refer in cases where they may be well applied.

The question is full of difficulty, and it cannot be said, after much discussion of it, that there appears to be any general agreement among Churchmen respecting the solution to be adopted. I have mentioned it only because I did not like to be silent in public upon a question about which I am sometimes called to give advice in private.

In the mean time, until some change is made, I can only express my opinion that the law of our rubric in this respect cannot be violated without serious consequences to the offender. If those whose duty it is to enforce the law neglect or refuse to do so, I have too great respect for the majesty of law to think that the power with which they are entrusted will not be transferred to other hands, or that means will be wanting to redress the grievance.

I received with great regret in the course of last year a copy of an Address presented to the Archbishops and Bishops of the United Church of England and Ireland by the Committee appointed at a meeting held in Oxford. It appeared to me not only that the alarm which suggested the Address and the Declaration by which it was accompanied, was

without sufficient foundation, but that the course taken by the meeting and by the Committee was a precedent full of danger.

The Committee were appointed "to draw up a statement setting forth the clear and consistent teaching of the Church of England and Ireland on matters upon which such clearness and consistency of teaching have been gravely questioned;" that is, as I understand it, to set forth the authoritative teaching of our Church in a new Article "for the avoiding of diversities of opinion and for the establishing of consent touching true religion."

However worthy of approval the substance of the Article might be, and however laudable the motives by which the distinguished men who allowed themselves to be put upon the Committee were actuated, I cannot help thinking that the course taken by a body of clergymen so appointed in drawing up a statement for such a purpose and collecting signatures to it as an Article of belief from presbyters and deacons in Holy Orders of the Church of England and Ireland, is contrary to the polity and laws of the Church and realm of England. The result, also, would seem to show that the reason alleged in justification of the course so taken had no sufficient foundation in fact. There does not appear to have been any need of such a step "in order to reassure the lay members of our Church of the faith of their clergy." The imputation thereby

cast upon the faith of the clergy does not seem to have had any sufficient warrant; nor was the stigma deserved which was felt by many to be thereby unavoidably placed upon those who, for various reasons, might decline to sign the statement. It is satisfactory to be assured by the authors of the Declaration that some thousands of the clergy were deterred from signing it, not by any doubt as to the faith of the Church of England or their own, but by reason of its form and circumstances.

It is not to be wondered at that the alarm which gave occasion to the appointment of the Committee, and which was provoked by a recent Ecclesiastical Judgment, should lead the persons who felt it to regard with suspicion the Court by which that judgment was pronounced and to criticize with severity its constitution and proceedings. A great deal of such criticism has been put into circulation, and objections have been raised against the Court of Final Appeal from Ecclesiastical Courts in England, many of them, no doubt, expressed in language which few among us would hesitate to call exaggerated. I cannot bring myself to believe that the arguments are of any great weight which have been urged against the constitution and functions of that Court, or that the course of its proceedings has been such as to render it unworthy of the confidence of Churchmen.

It is easy, no doubt, for any one to suggest improvements, but the suggestions which have occurred to me after much thought upon the subject relate only to matters of comparatively small importance, and do not touch the main points of the constitution and functions of the Court or the principles which the Judicial Committee have laid down for the government of their proceedings. I have at least much confidence in saying that none of the suggestions, which have come to my knowledge, for altering in essential points the mode of finally determining appeals in ecclesiastical causes are free from various objections.

I am one of those who accept heartily the settlement of the laws of our ecclesiastical polity which was made at the time of the Reformation of the Church of England. It would not be easy to rate too high the importance of the two statutes for the restraint of appeals passed in the 24th and 25th years respectively of the reign of King Henry the Eighth. They were, perhaps, the most important of all the measures taken in that eventful reign for defining the constitution of the Church and realm of England; and have been most beneficial in their operation, not only as rescuing us from the dominion of a foreign ecclesiastical power, but also as settling the relations of our Clergy to the civil power. "The supreme authority of kings," writes

Hooker, "is no otherwise intended or meant than to exclude partly foreign powers and partly the power which belongeth in several unto others contained as parts within that politic body, over which those kings have supremacy . . . . Where the king hath power of dominion, or supreme power, there no foreign state or potentate, no state or potentate domestical, whether it consist of one or of many, can possibly have, in the same affairs and causes, authority higher than the king."

"Under dominion of infidels," again he writes, "the Church of Christ and their Commonwealth were two societies independent: in those commonwealths where the Bishop of Rome beareth sway, one society is both the Church and the Commonwealth." "If it were not so," he writes in another place, "the name of the Church in a Christian Commonwealth must be restrained to the Clergy, excluding all the residue of believers, both prince and people." "But," he proceeds, "the Bishop of Rome doth divide the body into two divers bodies and doth not suffer the Church to depend upon the power of any civil prince or potentate. Within this realm of England the case is neither as in the one, nor as in the other of the former two; but from the state of pagans we differ, in that with us one society is both the Church and Commonwealth, which with them it was not; as also from the state of those nations which sub-

ject themselves to the Bishop of Rome, in that our Church hath dependency upon the chief in our Commonwealth, which it hath not under him. In a word, our estate is according to the pattern of God's own ancient elect people, which people was not, part of them the Commonwealth, and part of them the Church of God, but the selfsame people, whole and entire, even both under one chief governor, on whose supreme authority they did all depend."

The supremacy of the Crown in all causes and over all estates of the realm, whether they be ecclesiastical or civil (Art. 37), is defined by our laws in many particulars, in nothing more exactly than in the exercise of "judicial authority higher than others are capable of." All causes, the knowledge whereof appertaineth to the spiritual jurisdiction of the realm, are to be adjudged and determined within the king's jurisdiction and authority (24 Hen. VIII. c. 12) in such courts, spiritual and temporal, of the same as the nature of the case shall require; and all appeals from such courts are to be carried to the king's majesty, to be determined by him finally in the manner which the laws prescribe.

I take it for granted that no one among us entertains any doubt about the wisdom of thus vesting the supreme judicial authority in the Crown, whatever difference of opinion may arise

as to the advice by which the Crown is to be governed. There must be no court for the trial of ecclesiastical causes which does not admit of such appeal to the Crown.

Now, when I consider the limits within which the functions of the Judicial Committee are exercised and the principles by which they have determined that their proceedings in regard to questions of doctrine shall be governed, I am at a loss to represent to myself the construction of a Court more fitted for its purpose, or more worthy of the confidence of those who are interested in its judgments. The distinguished men who have taken part in the proceedings of the Court have determined that it is no part of its functions to declare the doctrine of the Church of England. They have taken pains to state with the greatest clearness and precision that they are bound to regard the doctrine of the Church as sufficiently declared in the written formularies which the law has sanctioned. Whatever may be the decision of the Court of Final Appeal, or of any other Ecclesiastical Court upon a question of disputed doctrine, the *litera scripta* of the Thirty-nine Articles and of the Book of Common Prayer remains the sole test of the soundness of doctrine, the sole authorized rule by which the teaching of the clergy must be governed. "This Court," we are told, "has no jurisdiction or authority to settle

matters of faith or to determine what ought in any particular to be the doctrine of the Church of England. Its duty extends only to the consideration of that which is by law established to be the doctrine of the Church of England upon the true and legal construction of her Articles and formularies." "Our province," the Committee say, "is on the one hand to ascertain the true construction of the Articles of religion and formularies referred to in each charge according to the legal rules for the interpretation of statutes and written instruments; and, on the other hand, to ascertain the plain grammatical meaning of the passages which are charged as being contrary to or inconsistent with the doctrine of the Church, ascertained in the manner we have described."

If this be a true statement of the functions of the Court of Final Appeal (and I must say for myself that I accept it heartily as the only definition of those functions which can give sufficient security either to the clergy, whose teaching may be called in question, or to the laity, whose right it is to know the authorized tests of doctrine), I do not see what objection can be brought with reason against the constitution of the Court to which such duties are committed. For the legal construction of written documents, for the exposition and interpretation of law, for the protection of the just rights of persons against whom criminal

charges, involving temporal pains and penalties, are brought, we require the services of judges, regularly trained in the profession of the law and accustomed to administer justice. The Judicial Committee of Privy Council always commands the services of such men, the most distinguished in their profession that the country has. Their impartiality in judgment, their breadth of view, the maturity of their experience, their skill in estimating the force of arguments, the pains with which they devote themselves to the cases brought before them, are beyond all criticism and merit universal confidence.

The Judicial Committee of Privy Council commands also, in happy mixture with others, the services of Ecclesiastics of the highest rank, whose long acquaintance with theology and with the distinctive teaching of the Church of England gives weight and value to their counsel. It is satisfactory to know that there never has been a judgment on a question of disputed doctrine, in which all the ecclesiastical members of the Court have been on one side and a majority of lay members on the other.

It has been proposed by some good friends of religion and of the Church, that, as it is the special province of the Clergy to make themselves acquainted with doctrine, it would be well to substitute for the Court of Final Appeal in matters

touching doctrine a body of spiritual persons, whose duty it should be in any case that may arise to declare the doctrine of the Church of England and advise the Crown accordingly. Others, again, are of opinion that the Court of Final Appeal, however constituted, should take into consideration in matters touching doctrine not only the written formularies, established by statute law, but what has been called the *common law* of the Church also; that is, as I understand it, a system of doctrine, not expressed in our Articles and Book of Common Prayer, but to be found current in the teaching of members and ministers of the Church, handed down by a sort of tradition from one age to another.

I cannot help saying that I think both these suggestions are practically full of danger, and that the adoption of either of them would bring consequences eventually which none would deplore more than those who have proposed them. It appears to me to be matter for great joy that we have had no body of persons since the Reformation armed with authority to declare from time to time the doctrine of the Church of England. If there is one thing more than another to which, under God, we owe the permanence of our Church and the consistency of teaching of its ministers, it is the enactment of law which prescribes written formularies as the sole test of soundness of doctrine and

the sole rule of teaching for our clergy. The maintenance of this principle by the Judicial Committee of Privy Council inspires me with confidence in their judgments. The organization of our Church would be a rope of sand without it.

The course of inquiry, which recent legal proceedings have rendered necessary, has brought into prominent light, no doubt, the fact that neither our code of Thirty-nine Articles, nor our Book of Common Prayer, nor the two formularies taken together, provide a complete body of doctrine embracing all the points on which the ministers of the Church find occasion to instruct their people. Our Articles of Religion were composed at a critical period of the religious history of the country, "for the avoiding of diversities of opinions, and for the establishing of consent touching true religion;" but they treat mainly of subjects which were then in controversy, and touch lightly or not at all other matters of opinion and of faith, about which, as the sixth Article says of the Canon of Holy Scripture, there had not been at that time "any doubt in the Church." Our Book of Common Prayer was set forth to establish "one uniform order of common service and prayer and of the administration of Sacraments, rites, and ceremonies," because it had been found (13 & 14 Car. II. c. 4) that "nothing conduced more to the settling of the peace of the nation, nor to the honour of our

religion and the propagation thereof than an universal agreement in the public worship of Almighty God." But, though the teaching of our Book of Common Prayer upon points of doctrine is of the greatest value and therefore rightly made binding upon our Clergy, it is obvious that such teaching was not within its main purpose, nor intended to represent a perfect summary of Christian doctrine. "There may be matters of doctrine," say the Judicial Committee, "on which the Church has not given any definite rule or standard of faith or opinion; there may be matters of religious belief on which the requisition of the Church may be less than Scripture may seem to warrant; there may be very many matters of religious speculation and inquiry on which the Church may have refrained from pronouncing any opinion at all."

I confess that when the defects, as some may consider them, of our authorized formularies were thus brought into prominence, I was not free from apprehension of the consequences. It seemed as if on some important points, about which no question had arisen heretofore, our clergy had no sufficient guide, and our laity no sufficient security for the soundness of the teaching of their ministers; as if some great effort ought to be made, by the creation of authority for the purpose, to supply what is lacking and to complete what the want of foresight of our Reformers allowed to remain

imperfect. Further consideration, however, has made me satisfied with the continuance of the circumstances in this respect under which our Church has prospered. When I see what the points of doctrine are on which our Church has given a clear decision, whatever may be the defect in her rules of teaching from a complete system, I am persuaded that the ministers who assent to our Articles and our Prayer Book, honestly adopting the doctrine found therein as the rule of their opinions and of their faith, and honestly setting forth that doctrine in its fulness to their people, cannot go far wrong in things about which the Church either has expressed no judgment at all or has expressed it in terms so doubtful that those who have to interpret her formularies abstain from speaking positively.

In what I have said about the Court of Final Appeal I have tried to consider its constitution and functions, in connexion with the judicial supremacy of the Crown, on general principles, without reference to the particular case of the recent judgment by which discussion has been provoked. The examination of that case, however, does not bring to my mind any doubt as to the general conclusions to which I have been led.

The inadequacy of the judgment, indeed, may be fairly admitted if it be held to relate to the whole volume of "Essays and Reviews," or the

whole of either of the two essays, of which parts were brought before the Court. But when we inquire into the facts we find that the Judgment related neither to the whole volume nor to the whole of either essay. The Committee speak, almost in a tone of complaint, of the unsatisfactory way in which the case was brought before them. "We are not at liberty," they say, "to take into consideration for the purpose of the prosecution the whole of the essay of Dr. Williams, or of the essay of Mr. Wilson. A few short extracts only are before us, and our Judgment must by law be confined to the matter which is therein contained." And again, "We desire to repeat that the meagre and disjointed extracts, which have been allowed to remain in the reformed Articles, are alone the subject of our Judgment. On the design and general tendency of the book called 'Essays and Reviews,' and on the effect or aim of the whole essay of Dr. Williams, or the whole essay of Mr. Wilson, we neither can nor do pronounce any opinion." It is not possible that any candid person should fail to appreciate the spirit of these remarks, which seem to intimate that, if the whole case of the prosecutors had been brought before the Court, the result might have been different. I feel it equally impossible to find fault with the principle by which the Court was guided, in accordance with the merciful character of all

our criminal judicature ; and which, while it allowed the accused persons to bring from other parts of their writings passages in explanation, confined the accusers strictly to the passages alleged as criminal. I cannot help thinking that much of the dissatisfaction which has been expressed at the result of the proceedings, and much of the criticism to which the Court of Final Appeal has been made subject, would have been directed with greater justice against the constitution and proceedings of the Court from which the appeals were brought, or against the course taken by the prosecutors, which prevented the Court of Final Appeal from considering the whole case.

It cannot be denied, however, or concealed that the questions raised by these unfortunate prosecutions carry us far beyond the particular writers and particular books against which they were directed. The right and duty of free inquiry in matters of religion, the application of our natural powers of mind and conscience to the things of God and heaven, the use of reason and intellect in things spiritual, the ground and proper limits of faith : subjects like these are discussed with freedom, and the thoughts of inquiring men are fixed on them with great and increasing interest.

I will not say that there is no cause for apprehension as to the result of this general movement, for those who think freely on such subjects

will think boldly; and there may be danger, lest through want of discernment of the necessary limits, within which it has pleased God to confine our knowledge of spiritual and religious things (*μυριοπλάσια τῶν ἐγνωσμένων ἐστὶ τὰ ἀγνοούμενα*), or through want of submission to those necessary limits, or of that chastening of mind and heart, which practical religion gives, men may go astray and suffer shipwreck, flying from supposed or real difficulties into blind superstition on the one hand or into equally blind infidelity on the other. But, while fully acknowledging the existence of ground for such apprehensions, I cannot help looking on the movement also with feelings of interest and hope and joy, because I am sure that all such inquiry, properly conducted, tends to elicit truth; and I am glad that worthy subjects should occupy the minds of men in an age when there is too much reason to fear the enervating effects of unprecedented wealth and means of luxury of living.

I feel strongly that it is not the part of the Clergy to discourage free inquiry or to deprecate the application of the best natural powers of mind to the investigation of questions of spiritual and religious interest. "What harm," said Cranmer, "can gold catch in the fire, or truth in discussion?"

If, indeed, I were in doubt, or had any mis-

givings about the claims of revealed religion to our devout acceptance, I might, perhaps, think it consistent with good policy and prudence to try to stifle inquiry and to persuade men to take for granted what might be found unable to stand the scrutiny of intelligent investigation. But, because a long life of thought, in which I thank God that I have enjoyed more than usually favourable opportunities of thought, has satisfied my inmost spirit that the claims of revealed religion, as professed and taught in the Church of England, are of unimpeachable validity, I cannot think it consistent with good policy and prudence, or with the due dignity of truth, to deprecate the free inquiry of intelligent and educated men, or to cast the ready stigma of infidelity upon every statement which appears to go beyond accustomed limits.

It will be an evil day for the Church, and if for the Church then for the realm, of England,—an evil day, I will venture to say, for the interests of morality and religion every where (for the position taken in the world of thought and letters by our Divines has gained respect for the Church of England every where), if the clergy of our Church do not show themselves equal to the occasion, if our ranks are not recruited by men of well-trained powers of intellect, if we do not prepare ourselves, one and all, as we have opportunity, with a due sense of the importance and responsibility of the

work, to lead the religious thought of men of education and intelligence.

There will always be, no doubt, men of perverse minds, actuated by immoral or self-indulgent motives, who take pleasure in handling sacred things with a wisdom which is earthly, sensual, devilish,—

Θεολόγος δὲ πᾶς καὶ ὁ μυρίαις κηλῖσι τὴν ψυχὴν στιγματίας.

The opposition of such men seems to be part of the necessary discipline of life to try the faith and patience of believers. But there are many others,—we must expect the number of them to increase daily,—who seek honestly for truth, who think it a duty, as well as a right, to prove all things, holding fast indeed that whereunto they have attained, but ever climbing higher. There is in many cases a yearning after accurate and perfect knowledge in spiritual things, beyond what it is given to us to reach, which yet is not to be altogether condemned, because it is to our feeling of dissatisfaction at imperfection and inaccuracy that our progress in all knowledge is to be traced; and the providence and grace of God will not be slow in satisfying honest inquirers that, whatever our attainments in spiritual things, it is not given to us, in our present state of being, to see more than through a glass darkly nor to know any thing but in part.

A contest seems to be thus always going on in the world between reason and faith. The question occurs continually to thinking men, "What am I to find out and learn by the use of thought and intellect? Where am I to submit myself and believe upon the credit of authority which I am bound to trust?" To some persons it seems as if the principles of reason and faith were essentially antagonistic to each other. Others, taught by larger experience and deeper wisdom, are satisfied that there is no necessary antagonism between them; that in minds of the highest order each principle may have its full scope for exercise in its own province without interfering with the other; and that the war, which appears to be always going on between them in the case of every person, is, in fact, a part of the discipline by which the providence and grace of God are preparing us for immortality.

In times of active intellectual effort the apparent contest between reason and faith is brought into greater prominence. We must take it into account and prepare ourselves to meet it.

It will be accepted, perhaps, as a true statement, if we say that for every person at every moment of his life the provinces of reason and faith in the things of religion are distinct; that the line which separates them could be drawn with precision by the hand of unerring wisdom; that every one of

us does practically draw such a line for himself, and that the process of drawing that line continually is one of the great tasks of conscience and duty, which cannot be evaded, and which make our moral life what it is, responsible and anxious. If you try to draw a line, sharp and hard, which shall separate from each other the provinces of faith and reason for all men at all times, you will find the task impossible. No such line can be drawn, because with regard to some things the position of the separating line is different for different persons placed in different circumstances, and for the same person at different times of life.

A class of things may indeed be marked out on one side or the other, with regard to which clear lines may be drawn for all persons at all times, shutting up the one class entirely within the province of faith, and the other entirely within the province of reason. I refer to such doctrines of Revelation as the Trinity of persons in the Godhead, the Incarnation of our blessed Lord, His Atonement, His continual prevailing Intercession, the doctrine of the two Sacraments of Grace, the past and present action of the Holy Spirit on the minds of faithful men. If it be granted that the book, in which such doctrines are found, is the Word of God, and that the doctrines have been rightly gathered from it, nothing can be more

contrary to reason than to try to subject them to the examination of the intellect, and to carry reason into a region where it has no scope for exercise. However clear it may become to us, as we use these doctrines, that they are in harmony with the facts and circumstances of human nature, and wonderfully adapted to the ends of spiritual discipline, it may be said with confidence that they lie altogether beyond the province of reason; that our intellect and mind and heart are to be employed simply to apprehend and use them; that they are to be received by faith (*σεβάσματι καὶ σιγῇ*), in the spirit of a little child, which says, "Speak, Lord; for Thy servant heareth."

Other things again may be mentioned which lie as clearly within the province of reason for those who have the means and opportunity to exercise thought upon them. What ground have we for thinking that the book we call the Bible is the Word of God? Have we in that Book, as it is now in use, the pure text of what the sacred authors wrote? Are we able rightly to understand the languages, now dead, and to translate them into our own language for popular use, so that those who read our translation may learn the real meaning of what was written? Can we draw from the Books of Holy Scripture, written as some parts of them appear to be for occasional and temporary purposes, a clear consistent system of doctrine,

which we may express in Articles of Faith? Questions such as these, and innumerable others might be added, are obviously subject to the application of the natural faculties with which the goodness of God has blessed us. To men of high intellectual attainments they seem to lie altogether within the province of reason. Every man, according to his opportunities, is bound to investigate and exercise thought upon them; though by large numbers among us, owing to the lack of qualifications and opportunity, the answers to such questions must be accepted in faith upon the credit of those who give them.

There seems thus to lie between the line which shuts up the province of faith on one hand and that which limits the province of reason on the other a field of greater or less extent for different persons or for the same person at different times of life, in which the question is continually agitated, "What am I to find out by searching, and where am I to rest content in the quietness and confidence of faith?" The task of considering such questions is difficult and anxious. To those, who through the grace of God have been brought to ripeness and perfectness of age in Christ, occasions when the task must be undertaken occur but seldom. The anxiety and difficulties of early years and of less ripe experience of the ways of God with men have been succeeded by settled convictions and principles which bring a

crown of glory to the aged head, and make the path of the just as the shining light which shineth more and more unto the perfect day. To the young and inexperienced, however, the difficulty is often trying. It occurs over and over again on many important occasions. It cannot be overcome without severe struggles ; nor can the anxiety of returning an answer to doubtful questions be relieved without much prayer and thought and study, supported by the encouragement of wise and faithful counsel.

It is the high and joyful office of the Ministers of religion to supply such counsel. They have not only to convince the gainsayers and to build up believers, but, what is perhaps far more difficult, to relieve the anxieties of earnest inquiring men, to help them in their perplexities, that they may have a clear conscience and find the right path and go on their way rejoicing.

Among the questions of religious interest, upon which the minds of men are fixed, I need not say that the question of the Divine authority of the Bible has created the liveliest apprehensions in the hearts of men of simple faith. All other questions sink into insignificance compared with that which touches the security of the foundation upon which we have been accustomed to rely. We have been deeply pained and shocked at what men have said and written of the Bible. It is impossible to

abstain from condemning with indignation the irreverent language with which efforts have been made to shake the faith of believers, or the self-confident arrogant tone of statements respecting the historical truth of Holy Writ, which, never of more than doubtful authority, the progress of discussion has shown to be unfounded. The questions, however, which have been raised respecting the authority of the Bible, have taken a deep hold of the minds of thinking men; and if no satisfactory answer be given to them, the discussion of them may die away, but a spirit of uncomfortable doubt will linger where all ought to be full of light and joy.

It has been said that our Church does not speak with sufficient clearness about the authority of Holy Writ; and some colour is supposed to be given to the statement by the Judgment in the recent prosecutions to which I have referred. And yet to one who weighs what is said upon the subject in our Articles of Religion and in our Book of Common Prayer it would seem to be abundantly clear that our Church declares the Volume, which we call the Bible, in its integrity, comprehending all the Canonical Books of the Old and New Testaments, to be the Word of God, and that it uses those books throughout to draw from them as Articles of Faith things necessary to salvation.

Our Church does not indeed lay down any

doctrine about the way in which the several writers of the sacred Books were enabled to communicate the Word of God; nor does it declare what use is to be made of Holy Writ for any other purpose than the regulation of religious faith and duty. But our authorized formularies seem to me to express a clear judgment that the whole Bible is the Word of God, and that Christians are bound to use it in what relates to faith and duty as an authority from which there is no appeal.

In the Twentieth of our Articles of Religion the terms, "God's Word written," "Scripture," "Holy Writ," are applied clearly to the Volume comprehending all the Canonical Books.

In the ordination of a deacon the candidate is asked, "Do you unfeignedly believe all the Canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments?"

In delivering the Bible to a candidate for the priesthood the Bishop is directed to say, "Take thou authority to preach the Word of God."

Can there be a doubt whether the Church, which uses such language and imposes such conditions, does thereby declare the Bible in its integrity to be the Word of God? Those who say that the Bible *contains* the Word of God seem to use such language to imply that the written words may be separated into two parts, one which expresses the mind and will of God, and another which is simply the utterance of the human writer and out of which

nothing can be gathered respecting religious faith and duty. Our Church makes no such admission, but requires her ministers to take the whole volume and to use it to instruct the people in matters of faith and duty.

I have always thought that the teaching of Hooker, than whom no writer of our Church is more worthy of confidence, is correct when he represents our Church as maintaining the sufficiency and completeness of Holy Scripture unto the end for which it was instituted. Speaking of those who "desire to enlarge the necessary use of the Word of God further than soundness of truth will bear," he says that they are "drawn into sundry great inconveniences."

"We count those things perfect," he writes, "which want nothing requisite for the end whereto they were instituted. As, therefore, God created every part and particle of man exactly perfect, that is to say, in all points sufficient unto that use for which He appointed it, so the Scripture, yea, every sentence thereof, is perfect, and wanteth nothing requisite unto that purpose, for which God delivered the same." "Two opinions there are," he writes in another place, "concerning sufficiency of Holy Scripture, each extremely opposite unto the other, and both repugnant unto truth. The schools of Rome teach Scripture to be so unsufficient, as if, except traditions were added, it did

not contain all revealed and supernatural truth, which absolutely is necessary for the children of men in this life to know that they may in the next be saved. Others, justly condemning this opinion, grow likewise unto a dangerous extremity, as if Scripture did not only contain all things in that kind necessary, but all things simply, and in such sort that to do any thing according to any other law were not only unnecessary, but were opposite unto salvation, unlawful and sinful. Whatsoever is spoken of God or things appertaining to God otherwise than as the truth is, though it seem an honour, it is an injury. And as incredible praises given unto men do often abate and impair the credit of their deserved commendation, so we must likewise take great heed lest, in attributing unto Scripture more than it can have, the incredibility of that do cause even those things, which indeed it hath most abundantly, to be less reverently esteemed."

If we have recourse to Holy Scripture for things for which it was not instituted, expecting to find in it infallible information upon such things, we use it for a purpose for which we have no warrant, either in the statements of the sacred writers themselves or in the teaching of our Church, and we ought not to be disappointed if our expectation is not realized. But when we go to it, as we ought, for our rules of faith and duty, both the teaching of

our Church and the statements of the sacred writers themselves lead us to expect to find throughout the whole of it the expression of the mind and will of God. We cannot separate the Divine from the human element in it if we would; nor can we say of any part of the Bible that it will not contribute, under God, to make us wise unto salvation. "Be it," says Hooker, "that together with the principal necessary laws of God there are sundry other things written, whereof we might haply be ignorant, and yet be saved. What! shall we hereupon think them needless? shall we esteem them as riotous branches wherewith we sometimes behold most pleasant vines overgrown? Surely no more than we judge our hands or our eyes superfluous, or what part soever, which if our bodies did want, we might, notwithstanding any such defect, retain still the complete being of men. As, therefore, a complete man is neither destitute of any part necessary, and hath some parts whereof, though the want could not deprive him of his essence, yet to have them standeth him in singular stead in respect of the special uses for which they serve; in like sort, all those writings which contain in them the law of God, all those venerable Books of Scripture, all those sacred tomes and volumes of Holy Writ, they are with such absolute perfection framed that in them there neither wanteth any thing, the lack whereof might deprive us of life,

nor any thing in such wise aboundeth that as being superfluous, unfruitful and altogether needless, we should think it no loss or danger at all if we did want it." "Let us not think," he writes in another place, "that as long as this world doth endure, the wit of man shall be able to sound the bottom of that which may be concluded out of the Scripture."

The minds of many have been agitated and disturbed of late by alleged improbabilities and errors to be found in the Bible in matters of history and science. Theories have been ingeniously invented against received opinions about the authorship of certain Books. Some have not hesitated even to assert intentional fraud in the composition and circulation of parts of the Old Testament, the authors of such assertions and theories, however, betraying an amount of credulity which might surprise us, if we did not know that no persons are so credulous as those who make it their business to overthrow the faith of others.

It is certain that many of the alleged errors and improbabilities have vanished upon examination, or at least have been shown to be exaggerated; that, though our hopeless want of information of particulars in occurrences of remote date prevents us from solving completely some of the puzzles that have been proposed to us, enough has been said about them to satisfy us that, if we had fuller

information, solutions would be ready; that the theories and assertions that we are asked to believe are far less worthy of credit than the opinions which they were framed to destroy and upon which the Church heretofore has been accustomed to rest in quiet faith.

Considerations such as these have not failed to remove apprehensions and to reassure perfect faith in Holy Scripture as the Word of God on the part of those who have had time and opportunity to dwell upon them. But if after all it should be made to appear that the treasure of the Word of God has come to us in earthen vessels, that the writers who were honoured by being chosen to convey it to us were men of like passions with ourselves, fallible in small matters of history and science, and not infallibly directed in such things, though guided by the Holy Spirit into all truth in matters of religious faith and duty, I can say for myself that the discovery would bring me no discomfort. If such imperfections, as have been alleged, could be proved to exist, they would weigh only as the dust in the balance when the scales are filled with things necessary to salvation; they would not shake for an instant the hold with which I grasp the principles of faith and duty that I gather from the Bible. The direct proof by which my judgment has been convinced of the authority of the whole Bible as the Word of God, would persuade

me to hear and receive it with meek heart and due reverence, even though the objections raised by men of perverse minds against the exactness of its record in small matters of history and science had not met with the contradiction by which they have been overthrown, or though they had been of far greater weight than their authors can justly claim for them.

It is to me the cause of great joy that the minds of many well-instructed scholars in this country are turned at the present time to the critical examination and interpretation of the Bible. I anticipate the best results from the labours of able men engaged in such inquiries. It is the office of the Clergy, above other men, to take part in such studies, or at least to make themselves acquainted as much as may be with the results of such inquiries conducted by other persons, that they may find out and make clear to those among whom they minister the real meaning of what our blessed Lord has caused to be written for our learning.

Let it be our study, my Reverend Brethren, to maintain as well in practice as in theory the healthy principle of Protestant Theology, which lays open the Bible to the intelligent examination of all inquirers, and urges all men to search the Scriptures according to their means and opportunities, remembering each his own personal responsibility to the Master, before whom he standeth or falleth, for his opinions and his conduct.

I have detained you, my brethren, at too great length; but so many things occur to me to be said, and on so many subjects, that it is not easy to be brief. Your kindness will forgive me for trespassing so long upon your patience. You will bear with me, also, if in what I have said I have expressed opinions different from what you have been led to form for yourselves. It is always with unfeigned regret that I find myself opposed in opinion to any among the clergy or laity of the diocese, who give attention to public questions of religious interest; but the occasion seems to require that I should both form and express opinions upon some of the many matters of interest which occupy the minds of Churchmen.

I turn with great relief to one thought, in conclusion, in which we shall all agree, touching the main end and aim of all that we are doing. If the busy world in which we live be, as it has been well said (Basil, Hex. Hom. i.),—*ψυχῶν λογικῶν διδασκαλεῖον καὶ θεογνωσίας παιδευτήριον*,—it is in the faithful discharge of the duties of our several stations that God vouchsafes to give us this knowledge of Himself, as we watch and pray and submit ourselves to the guidance of His Holy Spirit.

You and I, my Reverend Brethren, ought to congratulate one another and try to strengthen ourselves by the thought, that it is the special

work and office of our vocation to acquaint ourselves with God. If we are doing our work well, we ought to be advancing with large steps in the acquisition of the knowledge, wherein standeth our eternal life. The appointed field of duty of some of us may be a narrow one; we may be lost to the observation of the world, while we are working in it; our voices may not be listened to or heard in controversy. But if we are faithful in ministering to the souls of others, and take advantage of our opportunities of religious thought and prayer, God will not fail to reveal Himself to our souls in secret:—"*Orando forte quam disputando diguius quæritur et invenitur facilius.*"

THE END.

GILBERT AND RIVINGTON, PRINTERS, ST. JOHN'S SQUARE, LONDON.

A CHARGE

DELIVERED TO

THE CLERGY AND CHURCHWARDENS

OF THE

DIOCESE OF WORCESTER,

BY

HENRY, LORD BISHOP OF WORCESTER,

AT HIS VISITATION IN JUNE, 1868.

London,
RIVINGTONS, WATERLOO PLACE
HIGH STREET, Oxford. | TRINITY STREET, Cambridge.
1868.

A CHARGE,

&c.

My Reverend Brethren of the Clergy, and my Brethren of the Laity,

Occasions such as that which has brought us together here this morning, occurring regularly after the customary period of three years, cannot fail to give rise to thoughts, wholesome indeed and worthy of encouragement, yet of peculiarly sober and affecting character.

To those among us of advanced age, who can look back upon many such meetings in past years, the thought must, without doubt, present itself, that the interval of three years is a large part of the ordinary working life of man, that the course of nature does not permit us to look forward to many more such meetings, and that before another Visitation in the Diocese of perhaps another Bishop some of us will have been called

upon to give up our account of the way in which we have administered the talents entrusted to us.

Many new Incumbents and Curates have joined the ranks of the Clergy of the Diocese since our last meeting, full of hope and zeal, let us trust, prepared to work heartily, as the grace of God enables them, in the joyful service of a faithful Master. The occasion seems to call upon all such persons to consider carefully their several positions and circumstances, and to gird up the loins of their minds in a firm and patient spirit for the work that lies before them.

Solemn and affecting, however, as the occasion is to all of us, it will not be other than bright and cheerful to true and faithful men. Are not the young among our Clergy putting on their armour in a good and holy cause? Are not those among us, who have long borne the burden and heat of the day, drawing near to the time when we may rest from our labours and be at length quiet from fear of evil in the many mansions of our Father's house in heaven?

I cannot enter upon what I wish to say to you without asking permission first to express, as on former occasions of the same kind, the grateful joy which I feel in the recollection of my intercourse during the past three years with the Clergy of the Diocese, and with those many friends of the Laity who take their part liberally and cheerfully

in Church-work. The affections which spring from such intercourse are of quick growth, but they are strong and lasting. Encouraged and strengthened as they are by unity of thought and feeling in matters of high moment, they will outlive the fashion of this world. Let us hope that they will bind us together for ever in the Communion of Saints in heaven.

Once more also, as on former occasions, let me entreat from all with whom I have been brought into relations of business at least a kind construction of the motives by which I have been governed in them. The office of a Bishop imposes many duties. I am sometimes almost alarmed at the number and magnitude of them in the Diocese of Worcester. It is not possible that they who scan the conduct of a Bishop closely should not think that they discover in his proceedings many cases of omission; things left undone, which they think ought to have been done; things done only in part and imperfectly, which they think that greater care and diligence would have enabled him to do completely. The office and work of a Bishop too in times like our own, of intelligent and inquiring thought, of strong excited feeling, and of bold utterances, require so much judgment, the careful consideration of so many things, so much nice balancing of arguments, so much forbearance and moderation in dealing with the

opinions of other persons, and yet so much firmness in maintaining what is right and true, that it is hopeless for any one to escape the animadversion of unfriendly critics, who rejoice in pointing out mistakes where their superior wisdom and discernment would have ordered matters otherwise.

No one can be more painfully conscious than myself of shortcomings and misdoings in the work to which I have been called; no one can be more grateful for the suggestions and advice of friends; no one can ask pardon with greater singleness of mind from our Heavenly Father for what is past, or pray with greater earnestness that He would teach my heart by the light of His Holy Spirit, and grant me, by the same Spirit, to have a right judgment in all things.

Church Collections.

I have frequently taken occasion to call the attention of the Clergy of the Diocese to the duty of giving their people opportunities by collections in Churches, and of urging them to contribute to the support of societies established for charitable and religious objects.

My reverend brethren will forgive me if I venture now again to call their attention to the subject.

We have reason to know that the duty of honouring the Lord with their substance has fallen very much out of use and been lost sight

of by our people, especially among the middle and lower classes of society. This habitual neglect of duty is found not only to make the good works which our Societies undertake languish for want of funds, but also to produce serious injury to the spiritual welfare of our people by leaving their hearts closed against the influence of high and holy motives.

No occasion of putting in use the most excellent gift of charity is so fruitful of good as that of collections made in Church at regular stated times in aid of Societies established for charitable and religious objects. The poor have then the opportunity of giving small sums. The act of giving, done while the Offertory sentences in our Prayer Book are read, is put upon the right footing of an offering made to God; and the preacher has the opportunity of urging the right motives which make the gift come back with blessing to the bosom of the giver.

Diocesan Societies.

I feel that no apology is due for pressing earnestly upon the attention of all my hearers the claims of our own Diocesan Societies, which are very far from receiving the support to which they are entitled. I refer particularly to the Birmingham Church Extension Society, the Church Extension Society and the Board of Education for the Archdeaconry of Worcester, and the Church Extension Society and the

Poor Benefice Fund for the Archdeaconry of Coventry.

If the law of Christ, that Christians should bear one another's burdens, be of peculiar force for the members of one family or household, and for those who are bound together by the tie of a common parish, something of the same kind of force may be claimed for it also in its application to the several parishes of one Archdeaconry or Diocese. If the rich parishes of the Diocese would help the poor; if those among us, who use the ministrations of our Church with a due sense of their value, would do what they can to promote and extend such ministrations in other parts of the Diocese where their full effect is hindered by want of means, the difficulties under which we labour would soon be found to vanish.

Church Building Society.

We are all well acquainted with other Societies, established in aid of Home or Foreign Missions or for other good purposes, which present strong claims for help. The occasion does not require that I should name them in particular. I feel myself bound, however, to mention one Society which seems this year to claim more than usual help, having reached the fiftieth year of its useful and well-directed course. I mean the Society which has been incorporated by Royal Charter to promote the enlargement and building of churches.

The Diocese of Worcester has received a large amount of help from this Society, no less a sum than £28,540 having been contributed by it for building or enlarging churches in 162 parishes of the Diocese.

It would be difficult to set too high value upon the good which the blessing of God has enabled this Society to do. It has encouraged local efforts; it has given much good advice with regard to plans and materials in building churches; it has distributed wisely the funds which the piety of Christians has placed at its disposal.

All who have watched its operations would see cause of deep regret and sorrow, in view of its past services and of its capacity for future usefulness to the rapidly increasing population of our country, if the want of support should compel it either to discontinue its grants, or to carry on its work in a feeble and inefficient manner.

Diocesan Church Extension.

I am happy to be able again to congratulate my hearers on the progress made in the Diocese by the work of restoring and improving churches, and of building new churches in places where the increase of the population has outstripped the church accommodation provided for them.

Permanent work like this gives cause for great joy, because we may reasonably hope that the

good resulting from it will continue and bear fruit long after we are gone, who now see it and have the privilege of taking part in it. They who help in such work may rejoice in thinking, not only that they are thereby providing for the immediate pressing wants of our people, but that they are also leaving a monument behind them to show to future generations that they are not ungrateful for the blessings which we have enjoyed in the rich legacy of our forefathers, who left us substantial buildings and spared no cost or trouble in fitting them for the holy uses to which they are devoted.

Would that the example set by some liberal and pious persons among us were more generally followed, that we might at length see some perceptible progress made in overtaking past neglect, and in filling the great void which remains to be occupied by the means of grace in the wide areas of our country parishes and among the crowded populations of our seats of trade and commerce.

Distrust.

In reviewing what has been done during the past three years I cannot, however, conceal from myself that the work of church building and church restoration has received a serious check in the growth of a feeling of distrust, which even they who see no ground for it cannot fail to have observed in the minds of many persons. Is it quite certain, we are asked,

that the buildings to which we are invited to contribute will be used for the purpose that we wish to see accomplished? Will the ministers and members of our Church to whom these buildings will be committed devote them in good faith to the uses of the reformed and pure service, which we have been wont to regard as characteristic of that Apostolical branch of the Church which is established in this kingdom?

The distrust of which I speak has found expression in the Diocese of Worcester as in other places; and unless we can succeed in showing that it does not rest on any good foundation, we must expect to see the work hindered which we have at heart, and to which heretofore the goodness of God has not denied His blessing.

Now I do not hesitate to say on the part of the Clergy and Laity in general of the Diocese of Worcester (and, if I may venture to speak on the credit of sources of information open to public use of persons beyond my own immediate sphere of work and knowledge, I would add, on the part of the Clergy and Laity of the country in general), that the feeling of distrust of which I speak cannot be shown to rest on any good foundation.

I do not speak without good means of knowing the truth of what I say, when I profess myself persuaded that the great body of the Clergy with whom it is my joy to be associated as a fellow-

worker in the Diocese of Worcester, are firm in their allegiance to the Church in which they minister; that they live and do the work of their sacred calling under an abiding sense of the promise made at the most solemn moment of their lives to give their "faithful diligence always so to minister the doctrine and Sacraments and the discipline of Christ, as the Lord hath commanded, and as this Church and realm hath received the same."

The accusation implied by the feeling of distrust of which I speak ought not to be lightly made. If it cannot be shown to rest on any good foundation, it ought to be dismissed at once from the minds of those who have been led to entertain it. Persons who claim for themselves, and with good reason, liberty to hold their own opinions on points which our Church has either not determined, or spoken so as to leave considerable room for variety of opinions within clearly defined limits, ought not to deny the same liberty to others, who keeping themselves fairly within such limits have been led to somewhat different conclusions.

No Church which encourages the use of inquiry and reason, as is the boast of the Church in which it is our privilege to minister, can expect or desire to shut up every point of doctrine drawn from Holy Writ within such narrow limits as to leave

no room for persons who cannot see every thing from one point of view to join heartily together under the same Lord and Master in a common course of action against the powers of evil.

I do not know that I can turn to better account the opportunity of our meeting than by asking the attention of my hearers to one or two of the many points upon which questions have been moved, and respecting which misapprehension or ignorance has supplied nourishment to the feeling of distrust which I wish to combat.

To most of my hearers the remarks which I may make will perhaps only answer the purpose of reviving the recollection of well-known truths. The revival of such recollections, however, is no unworthy object; and those among us who do not seem to require it will at least pardon the intrusion, if the blessing of God shall guide what I say to the better instruction of our younger brethren, the removal of misapprehensions, the reassurance of the doubtful, and the binding us all together more closely than heretofore in unity of spirit and in the bond of peace.

The Lord's Supper.

At a time when the minds of thoughtful men are turned with more than usual interest to questions of religious faith it was to be expected that the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper would occupy the chief place of attention.

No Christian can fail to see in the Lord's Supper "the crown of public service and the most solemn and chief work of Christian assemblies."

It was around the doctrine of the Lord's Supper that the chief battles were fought, which issued in the separation of our National Church from communion with the Church of Rome; and it is in the doctrines now held and taught respecting it by the Latin and Greek Churches, with a tenacity which admits of no compromise, that we find now the most impassable barrier which separates us from them.

It might be supposed that the discussions respecting the Lord's Supper, which took place in England and on the continent of Europe in the sixteenth century, had exhausted all that could be said about it; and whoever will take the trouble to examine those discussions will find good reason to believe that the supposition is well founded. Hardly any thing can be added to the arguments on either side of the many questions which were then in agitation.

The distinguished men to whom we are indebted for the compilation of our Formularies at that time were well acquainted with the controversy in all its branches. They took part in it, armed with all needful learning, and strengthened by such earnestness of belief and of purpose, that they did not count their lives dear unto them, if

only they could succeed in establishing as the settled creed of our Church doctrines which they held to be of vital moment.

It is not possible for us, looking back upon the controversies of that time, to consider the Formularies which we now use with so much profit, without paying a large tribute of admiration to the conspicuous wisdom by which those eminent men were guided.

The more frequently and the more carefully I consider in particular the "Order of the Administration of the Lord's Supper" with which our Book of Common Prayer supplies us, and the first part of our Homily, "Of the Worthy Receiving and Reverent Esteeming of the Sacrament of the Body and Blood of Christ," having regard to the questions which have been and are in agitation, and to the differences of opinion which must always be found in the minds of earnest men upon subjects of holy mystery, the more I am led to admire the wisdom of our Reformers in steering clear of difficulties, in avoiding unnecessary offence, in setting forth the truth plainly and firmly for the apprehension of our communicants, yet with all tenderness for the opinions of those who do not openly oppose it.

The main principle upon which they proceeded is well known, and the truth and value of it are universally acknowledged. "Before all other

things," says our Homily, "this we must be sure of especially, that this Supper be in such wise done and ministered, as our Lord and Saviour did and commanded to be done, as His holy Apostles used it, and the good Fathers in the Primitive Church frequented it." We are to be guided by the actual teaching of our Lord and His Apostles, preserved to us by the Church, as the keeper of Holy Writ, and by what the careful study of early records can discover to have been the actual practice of the Primitive Church.

Nothing at first sight would seem to be simpler than the account of the institution of the Lord's Supper in the four passages of the New Testament in which it is recorded. When, however, we come to dwell upon the words of the three Evangelists and of St. Paul with the long, deep, earnest thought invited by the subject, the busy mind proposes many questions, to which, while the subtle wit of some would persuade them that they have found an answer, the patient experience of "holy and humble men of heart" has long since convinced them that in sober truth no answer can be given.

They "which of human and corrupt curiosity," is the language of the Proclamation concerning the irreverent talkers of the Sacrament, set forth by King Edward the Sixth in the first year of his

reign, "hath desire to search out such mysteries as lieth hid in the infinite and bottomless depth of the wisdom and glory of God, and to the which our human imbecility cannot attain . . . . ofttimes turneth the same to their own and others destruction by contention and arrogant rashness, which simple and Christian affection, reverently receiving and obediently believing, without further search, taketh and useth to most great comfort and profit."

Our first impression respecting the simplicity of the doctrine of the Lord's Supper after all is right. "The way of holiness" is plain and easy, by which we draw near to God in it. "The unclean shall not pass over it;" but "the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein," if only they will cease to "search and strive unreverently," and content themselves with doing simply what our Lord has plainly told us.

"Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to His disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is My body. And He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; for this is My blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins."

In obedience to our Lord's command we try to do as our Lord has told us. His ministers in our Church take bread, and bless it, and break it, and

give it to His disciples. They take the cup likewise, and give thanks or bless it, and distribute it to the faithful.

We, the Ministers to whom this office is committed, believe, and we teach our people to believe, that as our Lord's faithful disciples severally eat the broken bread and drink the cup of blessing, they do verily and indeed eat the flesh and drink the blood of our once crucified, but now risen and exalted, Saviour. "To such as rightly, worthily, and with faith receive the same, the bread, which we break, is a partaking of the body of Christ; and likewise the cup of blessing is a partaking of the blood of Christ" (Art. 28). We have in the Lord's Supper, as our Homily teaches, "communion of the body and blood of the Lord in a marvellous incorporation, which by the operation of the Holy Ghost, the very bond of our conjunction with Christ, is through faith wrought in the souls of the faithful, whereby not only their souls live to eternal life, but they surely trust to win their bodies a resurrection to immortality."

Real Presence.

All would be well if they who present themselves at this holy feast, bearing in mind the words of Hooker (Book v. c. 67), that "this heavenly food is given for the satisfying of our empty souls, and not for the exercising of our curious and subtle wits," would "more give themselves to meditate with silence what we have

by the Sacrament, and less to dispute of the manner how." Let those who enjoy not, dispute; let us who enjoy, dispute not.

If men go on to ask what is the exact effect upon the bread and wine of the act of blessing, by which they are prepared for the reception of the faithful; what is the manner of the presence of the body and blood of our Lord in the Holy Supper; what is precisely the connexion of the outward visible sign of the Sacrament with the inward spiritual grace;—*nil temere definimus*, says Bishop Andrews. Our Church does not presume to speak with the authority of definition upon any such questions, though she supplies us with many safeguards against manifest and acknowledged errors which have prevailed respecting them.

"Transubstantiation," says our twenty-eighth Article of Religion, "or the change of the substance of bread and wine in the Supper of the Lord, cannot be proved by Holy Writ; but is repugnant to the plain words of Scripture, overthroweth the nature of a Sacrament, and hath given occasion to many superstitions;" and, in order to guide our thoughts into a safer channel, it is added, "The body of Christ is given, taken, and eaten in the Supper only after an heavenly and spiritual manner. And the means whereby the body of Christ is received and eaten in the Supper is faith."

Again, in the twenty-ninth Article of Religion it seems to me that our Church has provided a simple test of great value for trying the truth of theories which pretend to explain the manner of the presence of the body and blood of our Lord in His Supper. Is the presumed presence such as to allow that "the wicked and such as be void of a lively faith" may be "partakers of Christ," the theory cannot be true in which that presence is asserted. Such persons are "in no wise partakers of Christ." When they "carnally and visibly press with their teeth" what is given to them, they eat and drink nothing but "the sign or Sacrament of so great a thing."

The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper consists of *two* parts. The bread and wine in themselves do not constitute the Sacrament; they are *throughout the service* the outward visible sign. The inward spiritual grace is not to be sought in them, though they are "the means" whereby that grace is given. "The bread and cup," writes Hooker, "are His body and blood, because they are causes instrumental upon the receipt whereof the participation of His body and blood ensueth." "Signum quidem est signum," writes Calvin in his Commentary on the tenth chapter of the First Epistle to the Corinthians (verse 3), "substantiamque suam retinet. Sed quemadmodum ridiculi sunt Papistæ, qui nescio quas meta-

morphoses somniant, ita veritatem et figuram quas Deus conjunxit separare non est nostrum. Confundunt Papistæ rem et signum. Divellunt signa a rebus profani homines, Suenckfeldius et similes. Nos mediocritatem servemus; hoc est, teneamus conjunctionem a Domino positam sed distinctam, ne quod unius est proprium in alterum perperam transferemus."

Wisely, however, as our Church abstains from defining any thing respecting the effect of the act of consecration upon the bread and wine in the Lord's Supper, there are plain indications in her teaching that it is not to be held for nothing. Having regard, it would seem, to the Divine authority of our Lord for the act itself of blessing, to the significant words of St. Paul, "the cup of blessing which we bless," still more perhaps to the remarkable words of our Lord spoken after the act of blessing, "this is My body," "this is My blood of the New Testament;" having regard further, no doubt, to the solemn warning of St. Paul addressed to those who eat and drink unworthily, our Church will not have the consecrated bread and wine treated like ordinary food. She directs them to be regarded by all with reverence, because they have been solemnly devoted to very holy uses. She gives scope at least for the opinions of those who set a very high value on the act of consecration, and will not allow such per-

sons to be regarded on that account as unfaithful members of her communion.

She declares, indeed, that by the act of kneeling, which she enjoins upon all receivers of the Holy Sacrament, "no adoration is intended, or ought to be done," to the sacramental bread and wine there bodily received, because they "remain still in their very natural substances, and therefore may not be adored." But she directs the minister to "reverently place upon the Lord's table what remaineth of the consecrated elements, covering the same with a fair linen cloth." And at the end of the service, while whatsoever remains of the bread and wine unconsecrated the curate is to have for his own use, "if any remain of that which was consecrated, it shall not be carried out of the Church, but the Priest and such other of the communicants as he shall then call unto him shall immediately after the blessing reverently eat and drink the same."

The minds of pious men can never be all in perfect accord upon such questions as the effect of the act of consecration upon the bread and wine in the Lord's Supper. There are many questions like it in the province of theology, though none perhaps which are in any degree equal to it in interest and importance.

Think of the solemn dedication of land or buildings to holy uses; of the imposition of hands at

Confirmation; of the offices of the Ordination of Priests and the Consecration of Bishops, by which they are set apart for ever to the performance of holy functions.

The consideration of such things cannot be free from mystery. The questions which arise about them are to be handled with reverence; they give large scope for faith and for such exercise of reason as well agrees with faith. Whoever would attain to right conclusions about them must abstain from hasty judgments; must allow their full weight to the opinions of pious men who have spent time and thought upon them; must give himself much to prayer, and open his heart and mind to the teaching of the Holy Spirit.

The Sacrifice of the Eucharist.

Among the questions of religion which have been lately moved among us none perhaps has given rise to greater misapprehension and perplexity than the doctrine or theory of the sacrifice in the Lord's Supper.

The opinions are well known which are held and professed by the Church of Rome respecting it. The Article concerning the Lord's Supper in the Creed of the Council of Trent, as set forth in the Bull of Pope Pius the Fourth, requires the following profession: "Profiteor in Missa offerri Deo verum, proprium et propitiatorium sacrificium pro vivis et defunctis; atque in sanctissimo Eucharistiæ Sacramento esse vere, realiter

et substantialiter corpus et sanguinem una cum anima et divinitate Domini nostri Jesu Christi."

It is plain that the thirty-first of our Articles of religion was intended to be a protest against this doctrine. "The offering of Christ once made is that perfect redemption, propitiation and satisfaction for all the sins of the whole world, both original and actual; and there is none other satisfaction for sin but that alone. Wherefore the sacrifices of Masses, in the which it was commonly said that the Priest did offer Christ for the quick and the dead, to have remission of pain or guilt, were blasphemous fables and dangerous deceits."

True, moreover, to their principle of bringing back the teaching and the services of our Church to the pattern set forth in Holy Scripture and in the practice of the Primitive Church, our Reformers took pains to represent the Lord's Supper, not as a sacrifice offered upon an altar, but as a feast provided for a company of persons at the Lord's table.

At the end of our "Order of the Administration of the Lord's Supper" are two Rubrics, full of meaning, directing that "there shall be no celebration of the Lord's Supper, except there be a convenient number to communicate with the Priest according to his discretion." "And if there be not above twenty persons in the parish of dis-

cretion to receive the Communion; yet there shall be no Communion except four, or three at the least, communicate with the Priest.

Again, in the Office for "The Communion of the Sick" it is directed that "three or two at the least" shall communicate with him: and in the Rubric at the end of the service provision is made for the case when the Sacrament of Christ's body and blood cannot be received by the sick man *for lack of company to receive with him*, in the comforting words by which the Curate is directed to instruct him, "that if he do truly repent him of his sins, and stedfastly believe that Jesus Christ hath suffered death upon the cross for him and shed His blood for his redemption, earnestly remembering the benefits he hath thereby, and giving Him hearty thanks therefore, he doth eat and drink the body and blood of our Saviour Christ profitably to his soul's health, although he do not receive the Sacrament with his mouth."

These rules and directions intimate in a manner not to be mistaken that the main idea which the compilers of our Church Services wished to set forth respecting the Lord's Supper is that of a feast for a company of persons at the Lord's table. The Priest must not celebrate the Lord's Supper by himself alone, as if he were offering a sacrifice to God, at which it was a matter of indifference,

with regard to the effect of the act of service, whether or not other persons were present at it.

It is observable that throughout the course of our "Order of the Administration of the Lord's Supper" there is not to be found a single word or expression giving encouragement to the notion that there is in the act of worship any presentation of a sacrifice resembling in the remotest degree that of which the Church of Rome imposes the belief upon her members.

In the two well-known passages where the word sacrifice occurs the ideas are altogether different. In one of them we are taught to pray that God would accept our "sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving," according to the direction of the Apostle in his Epistle to the Hebrews (xiii. 15). In the other we are led to offer and present "ourselves, our souls and bodies, to be a reasonable, holy and lively sacrifice" unto God, according to the direction of St. Paul in his Epistle to the Romans (xii. 1).

Moreover they who read our service carefully will discover many passages apparently designed to call away the thoughts of the worshippers from any supposed sacrifice of propitiation in the service itself, and to fix them on the One Sacrifice, once offered, after which there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin. Our Lord Jesus Christ was given "to

suffer death upon the cross for our redemption," and "made there, by His one oblation of Himself once offered, a full, perfect and sufficient sacrifice, oblation and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world." The Sacrament, or service, which our Lord "did institute, and in His holy Gospel command us to continue," is not any reiteration of the sacrifice once offered, but "a perpetual memory of that His precious death."

It is not to be denied, however, that from the time of the Reformation downward writers on theology, of whom the Church of England is justly proud, have not hesitated to represent the Lord's Supper as containing—over and above the two sacrifices which I have mentioned of praise and thanksgiving, and of the bodies and souls of the worshippers—a sacrifice, *representative*, or *commemorative*, as it is termed, of our Lord's death; and it is contended by such writers that, although no sanction may be given to the notion by the words of our service, it is not in any way opposed to what we find there written.

Used as the term has been by the writers to whom I refer, and taken along with the explanations and interpretations which they have given of the use of it, far be it from any of us to assert that the word sacrifice is not admissible, or that they who set great value on it, and would resist strenuously every persuasion to discontinue the

use of it, are not thoroughly faithful and loyal to the Church in which they worship.

May it not be said that upon every occasion when we offer prayer and praise to our Heavenly Father in the name of our Saviour we do in fact plead before the throne of grace the sacrifice of atonement, for the sake of which our worship is accepted? How much more, then, do we *represent* and *commemorate* our Lord's death in that most holy service, where not only do we offer in our Lord's name with more than usual solemnity the sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving and the sacrifice of our souls and bodies, but the faithful are privileged so to draw near to God as to eat the flesh and drink the blood of His dear Son, whereby we dwell in Him and He in us. Surely upon such occasions if ever is set forth evidently "imago et solennis repræsentatio illius sacrificii ἱλαστικοῦ, quod Christus cum sanguinis effusione obtulit in cruce[1]."

Considering, however, the necessity which the writers who most delight to use the term have felt for guarding it by explanations; considering, also, the gross abuse of it which is sanctioned and enjoined by the Church of Rome, I cannot help expressing my regret that the term, "Sacrifice of

[1] Zanchius, quoted by Laud, Conference with Fisher, sect. 35.

the Eucharist," should continue in use among us, because it gives rise unavoidably to misrepresentations and misconceptions of the teaching of our Church, and is calculated seriously to mislead those who, relying on the authority of deservedly-respected names, are led to adopt and use the words without sufficient caution. I would rather say with Hooker, whose judgment on all disputed points is seldom or never wrong, "Sacrifice is now no part of the Church ministry" (Book 5, c. 78).

After much careful search and study of the subject I profess myself unable to find in the words of Holy Writ, or in any inferences which can be fairly drawn therefrom, any sufficient authority for the use of the word Sacrifice, as applied specially to the act of service in the Lord's Supper. The student of the New Testament is familiar enough with the words, "breaking of bread," "the Communion," "the Lord's Supper;" but we look in vain for any expression intimating that a sacrifice is then offered; and it is observable that the word itself (ποιεῖτε) on which so much undue stress is sometimes laid, and the argument from the use of which has been so often refuted, is not to be found at all in the accounts given by St. Matthew and St. Mark of the institution of the Sacrament.

The word Sacrifice, as applied to the Lord's Supper, in fact is altogether of Ecclesiastical

origin, having been brought into use, indeed, in very early days, as soon, perhaps, as the middle of the second century, but at a time when "old recollections attached to the Jewish Church had still their effect on the views and vocabulary of the early Christians."

We are indebted to the researches of Dr. Waterland, than whom no more competent inquirer ever applied himself to such a task, for a comprehensive and accurate review of the opinions of early Christian writers on the subject. "The service of the Eucharist," he says[2], "on the foot of ancient Church language, is both a true and a proper sacrifice, and the noblest that we are capable of offering, when considered as comprehending under it many true and Evangelical sacrifices. First, the sacrifice of alms to the poor and oblations to the Church. . . . Secondly, the sacrifice of prayer. . . . Thirdly, the sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. . . . Fourthly, the sacrifice of a penitent and contrite heart. . . . Fifthly, the sacrifice of ourselves, our souls and bodies. . . . Sixthly, the offering up the mystical body of Christ, that is, His Church; or, rather, it is coincident with the former, excepting that there persons are considered in their single capacity, and here collectively in a body. . . . Seventhly, the offering up of true converts or sincere penitents to God by their

[2] Review of the Doctrine of the Eucharist, ch. 12.

pastors. . . . Eighthly, the sacrifice of faith and hope and self-humiliation, in commemorating the grand Sacrifice and resting finally upon it. . . . These, I think, are all so many true sacrifices, and may all meet together in the one great complicated sacrifice of the Eucharist. Into some one or more of these may be resolved, as I conceive, all that the ancients have ever taught of Christian sacrifices or of the Eucharist under the name or notion of a true or proper sacrifice."

After an elaborate examination in detail of the works of particular writers, from Clement of Alexandria to Augustine, he adds: "They will all be found constant and uniform in one tenour of doctrine, rejecting all material, corporeal, terrene, sensible sacrifices, and admitting none but spiritual, such as I have mentioned." And again: "The Fathers well understood, that to make Christ's natural body the real sacrifice of the Eucharist, would not only be absurd in reason, but highly presumptuous and profane; and that to make the outward symbols a proper sacrifice, a material sacrifice, would be entirely contrary to Gospel principles, and at the same time degrading the Christian sacrifice into a Jewish one, yea and making it much lower and meaner than the Jewish, both in value and dignity. The right way, therefore, was to make the sacrifice spiritual; and it could be no other upon Gospel principles."

At the risk of wearying my hearers, for at the present time the point is one of more than usual importance, I venture to add one other testimony of value from the pen of Archbishop Sharp to the opinions of early Christian writers on the sacrifice of the Eucharist.

"We do not deny," he writes[3], "that the whole Office of the Communion, as it is ordered in our Liturgy, and as it is performed by us, may be called a Sacrifice; nor do we scruple to call this service the Christian Sacrifice by way of eminency, because we find the ancient Fathers frequently so styling it. But then it is only upon these three accounts we give it that name; and upon examination it will be found that it was for the same reason and in the same notions that it was so called by Antiquity. First of all, in this service we bring our offerings to God for the use of the poor. . . . We do also offer up in the most solemn manner our prayers for ourselves, and our intercessions for the whole Church; our praises, likewise, and our thanksgivings; and, lastly, ourselves, our souls and bodies: all these we offer up as a sacrifice to God, and in the sense of Antiquity they are a main part of the Christian Sacrifice. But then, thirdly, to complete the Christian Sacrifice, we offer up both the aforesaid oblations or sacrifices with a particular regard to that one Sacrifice

[3] Sermons against Popery, vol. vii., Sermon 11.

of Christ which He offered upon the cross, and which is now lively represented before our eyes in the symbols of bread and wine. That Sacrifice of His we now commemorate before God. We plead the merits and the virtue of it before Him; and for the merits and by the virtue whereof we have the confidence to offer up unto God the two fore-named sacrifices and the confidence to hope they shall be accepted. And in this sense we will not deny that we offer up even Christ to His Father; that is, we commemorate to God what His Son hath suffered; we represent to Him the inestimable merits of His passion, and we desire God, for the sake of that, to be at peace with us, to hear our prayers and accept our oblations. . . .

"In these three things consisted the whole of the Christian Sacrifice, as it was held by the primitive Fathers. They first offered to God of their substance; then they offered their prayers and their praises; and, at the same time, they commemorated to God the death and sacrifice of Christ, by the merits of which they hoped and they prayed that both their oblations and themselves might be accepted. . . . This is the whole of the Christian Sacrifice, as the Ancients understood it; and if the Church of Rome would be content with such a sacrifice as this, I know none that would oppose them. . . . But the Romanists have invented a new sacrifice, which Christ never instituted, which

the Apostles never dreamt of, which the primitive Christians would have abhorred, and which we, if we will be followers of them, ought never to join in."

The object would not be attained which I have in view in calling the attention of my hearers to the question of the sacrifice in the Lord's Supper, if I did not mention, however briefly, the attempt made in the early part of the last century to introduce *then for the first time* into the belief of members of the Church of England the doctrine of a material sacrifice, carefully distinguished from what is spiritual, in the Lord's Supper.

The excellent writer Dr. Waterland from whose works I have already quoted, and who was raised up by the providence of God into the first rank of those who then resisted the novel doctrine, does not hesitate to condemn by reasons drawn, as he says, from Scripture, from Antiquity, and from the nature of things, the "strange lengths and unwarrantable excesses" to which it led its author.

The theory put forth by the author of "The Unbloody Sacrifice" has never met with favour from any but a small body of adherents in the Church of England. I am persuaded that it has few supporters, if any, at the present day. I should not however do justice to my sense of the gravity of the questions involved, if I did not take

this opportunity of expressing my conviction that the doctrine of a *material propitiatory* sacrifice in the Lord's Supper by the offering of the bread and wine after consecration, however qualified by words which seem to have been contrived ingeniously to darken knowledge, has no real foundation to rest upon; and that it cannot fail to lead those who adopt it into superstition and a total misconception of the nature of the office of the Ministers of Christ and Stewards of the mysteries of God (1 Cor. iv. 1).

The belief of such a doctrine would rob the members of the Church of Christ of the greatest of all their privileges, that we should have, one and all, "immediate access to the true expiation, and not be kept as it were at a distance from it by the intervention of secondary sacrifices or secondary expiations[4]."

The Primitive Church.

In speaking of the Lord's Supper I have called attention to the main principle which was kept in view by our Reformers of the sixteenth century, that is to say, regard to the written Word of God in the Bible, and to the teaching and practice of the Primitive Church.

There was no argument which they urged more often or with greater confidence than that, in departing from the doctrines and practices of the

[4] Waterland, Appendix to Charge of 1738.

Church of Rome, they were returning to the original faith of the Gospel and to the original forms of Christian worship, "ad priscorum temporum rationem," "ad primordia atque initia tanquam ad fontes rediisse."

Zeal for the supreme authority of Holy Writ is the most plain and undoubted characteristic of the Church of England. "Holy Scripture," she tells us, "containeth all things necessary to salvation." The three Creeds "ought thoroughly to be received and believed, for they may be proved by most certain warrants of Holy Scripture." "It is not lawful for the Church to ordain any thing that is contrary to God's Word written;" and "as it ought not to decree any thing against the same, so besides the same ought it not to enforce any thing to be believed for necessity of salvation." Things ordained by General Councils "as necessary to salvation have neither strength nor authority unless it may be declared that they be taken out of Holy Scripture." "The Romish doctrine concerning purgatory, pardons, worshipping and adoration as well of images as of relics, and also invocation of saints, is a fond thing vainly invented and grounded upon no warranty of Scripture, but rather repugnant to the Word of God." "Transubstantiation, or the change of the substance of bread and wine in the Supper of the Lord, cannot be proved by Holy Writ, but is re-

pugnant to the plain words of Scripture." Tradition and ceremonies "may be changed according to the diversities of countries, times and men's manners, so that nothing be ordained against God's Word." Every Priest and every Bishop before admission to his office must profess that he is "persuaded that the Holy Scriptures contain sufficiently all doctrine required of necessity for eternal salvation through faith in Jesu Christ;" and that he is determined "to teach nothing, as required of necessity to eternal salvation, but that which he *shall be persuaded* may be concluded and proved by the Scripture."

The force of these repeated assertions of the supremacy and sufficiency of Holy Scripture in all essential points of doctrine is not to be mistaken. But our Church does not refuse to avail herself, nor deny to the members of her communion the benefit of the authority in many particulars of the teaching and practice of the Primitive Church.

The Christians who lived next after the Apostles' days supply to us valuable, I may say necessary, help. We learn from them how to interpret some passages of Scripture which seem obscure. Their writings are our only source of authority for some customs and practices and rites of Divine Worship, which the Church Universal has adopted from them. Above all, we depend upon

them for our knowledge of the Canon itself of Holy Writ, and for the transmission of the several books of inspiration for the use of after ages. "We believe the holy Canon of the Bible," wrote Archbishop Cranmer in his "Confutation of Unwritten Verities," "because that the Primitive Church of the Apostles and eldest writers and next to their time approved them in their Register, that is, in their writings, which partly saw them and partly heard them of the Apostles; and more receive we not, because these old Fathers of the first Church testify in their books that there was no more than these required to be believed as the Scripture of God."

"Here you have," says our Church in the Preface "Concerning the Service of the Church" prefixed to our Book of Common Prayer, "an Order for Prayer and for the reading of the Holy Scripture, much agreeable to the mind and purpose of the old Fathers." In the service of Commination, to be used on the first day of Lent, a desire is expressed for the restoration of such godly discipline as was "in the Primitive Church." "It is a thing plainly repugnant," says our Twenty-fourth Article, "to the Word of God and the custom of the Primitive Church to have public prayer in the Church or to minister the Sacraments in a tongue not understanded of the people." In the preface to the form and manner

of Ordinations we are told that "it is evident unto all men diligently reading the Holy Scriptures and ancient authors that from the Apostles' time there have been these orders of ministers in Christ's Church, Bishops, Priests and Deacons."

We act upon the authority or at least strengthen ourselves by the precedent of the Primitive Church in making Sunday, rather than Saturday, the day of weekly rest and public worship, in the practice of Infant Baptism, in the "solemn, ancient and laudable custom in the Church of God, continued from the Apostles' times" (Canon 60) of Confirmation, in the adoration of our Lord Jesus Christ by Divine worship, and in the refusal of all such worship to the Virgin Mary or any other creature. In many such things, to use the words of Archbishop Laud[5], it may be "somewhat difficult to find the collection out of Scripture only, . . . but the tradition being apostolical led on the Church easily to see the necessary deduction out of Scripture." "And this," he adds, "is not the least use of tradition to lead the Church into the true meaning of those things which are found in Scripture though not obvious to every eye there."

One instance among many that might be urged as worthy of remark, of the principle of regard to Antiquity by which the final settlement of the Formularies of our Church was governed, is to be

[5] Conference with Fisher, sect. 15.

found in the Article on Baptism now numbered as the Twenty-seventh of our Articles of Religion. In the Articles proposed as the standard of doctrine in 1553 we read "the custom of the Church to christen young children is to be commended and in any wise to be retained in the Church." In the form finally settled in 1571, as we now have it, the phrase stands thus: "The Baptism of young children is in any wise to be retained in the Church." Why? Not because such is the custom of the Church,—it might have been a custom of unknown or late origin,—but "as most agreeable with the institution of Christ."

"Ad primordia atque initia tanquam ad fontes," I repeat, is the motto of our Church, as we gather it from her Formularies,

τὸ τοῦ κηρύγματος ἄνωθεν ἀσάλευτον ἐκδιδάσκουσα.

They who read the controversies of our Reformers with members of the Church of Rome in the early days of the Reformation will find, indeed, many instances of reference to Ecclesiastical authors of a date far removed from Primitive Antiquity. But the motives are sufficiently intelligible by which they were governed in such references; they were ready to meet their antagonists on their own ground; they spoke and wrote, moreover, according to their own old habits and made use of the learning which their former studies had made familiar.

Our writers of the Church of England in a later age, who had occasion to look at the Fathers from other points of view and to defend their Church against attacks from other quarters, took a narrower range in appealing to Antiquity and one which was in more exact agreement with the principle upon which our Church is founded.

Our well-instructed Divines of the seventeenth century would have been astonished beyond measure if they had been told, as some in the present day would tell us, to look for their authority in matters of faith and practice to writings and documents of as late a date as the time of separation from one another of the Greek and Latin Churches. They knew full well, what is indeed patent to all inquirers, that in *the undivided Church*, long before the separation, as well in the writings of individuals as in the public acts of Councils and in the recognized usages of Divine worship, are to be found some of the greatest errors against which the Reformers of our Church protested. The last public act of the united Greek and Latin Communions in the Seventh General Council established as a law for the whole Church that worship of the relics of the Saints and of their Images, which we of the Church of England regard, not without reason, as one of the greatest practical corruptions by which the religion of our Lord has been dishonoured.

The writers of more modern days, who by long and accurate study of early Christian writers have earned the best right to guide us, urge us not to seek for our authority in matters of faith and practice beyond the limits which our Church has wisely indicated. They recommend us, not without many sober words of caution to be observed even within such limits, to seek, if we will, for information to guide us usefully in the interpretation of Scripture or in the knowledge of Christian institutions and practices in the writings of the Fathers of the Ante-Nicene Church, and chiefly of those who lived in the generations next after the Apostles. "Cleave fast," says our excellent Homily on the Lord's Supper, from which I have already quoted, referring to the words of Cyprian, "to the first beginning; hold fast the Lord's tradition; do that in the Lord's Communion which He Himself did, He Himself commanded and His Apostles confirmed."

Union with Greek and Latin Churches.

Among the causes of the distrust of which I have spoken I am inclined to think that none has been more fruitful than the desire which has been expressed by some members of our Church for the restoration of *visible unity* with the Greek and Latin churches. The establishment of such *visible unity*, or *corporate re-union*, as it is sometimes called, has been treated not only as a thing to be

cordially desired, but as a result to which there is "no insurmountable obstacle" if proper explanations could be made on both sides by competent authorities. We are told, for instance, that "there is nothing in the Council of Trent which could not be explained satisfactorily to us;" and that "there is nothing in our Articles which cannot be explained rightly, as not contradicting any things held to be *de fide* in the Roman Church." Some would even try to persuade us that our breach of communion with the Church of Rome in the sixteenth century was made without sufficient cause; that our Reformers were fighting for a shadow when they fought to the death for the principles of the Reformation; that they did not really understand the dogmas of the Church of Rome, against which they thought it to be their duty to protest; that they and we and all who have succeeded them in the Church of England from that time to the present have been under a mistake; that the time has now come when we may accept the result of more exact inquiry, give up the name of Protestant, in which we have hitherto gloried, and, looking at the alleged points of difference between our own Church and the Church of Rome without the heats engendered by the rash, unreasoning haste of our forefathers, close at length the breach which never ought to have been opened.

It cannot surprise us that they who have persuaded themselves into the belief of such things should try to "smoothe down difficulties," should take pleasure in adopting and recommending practices of common use in the Churches of Rome and of the East with the view of diminishing the distance which separates us from them, and should avail themselves of opportunities to familiarize the minds of others with the thought of union.

God forbid that any one among us should wish to exaggerate the differences which separate us from communion with the Greek and Latin Churches. I hold it to be a duty incumbent upon all Christians to try to reduce such points of difference within the narrowest possible limits, to encourage in themselves and in other persons, with regard to such points of difference, the charity that thinketh no evil, to abstain from magnifying or holding up to undeserved reproach the errors of those who acknowledge the same Lord and rejoice in hope of a common salvation in the Gospel. All endeavours for unity, without loss of truth, are worthy of commendation. If it be possible, as much as lieth in us, let us live peaceably with all men.

But after allowing their full weight to all such considerations, deploring the shame and sin of causeless schism, taking all due precaution against the blindness of prejudice which leads persons,

who have been accustomed to look at those who oppose them from one narrow point of view, to think that truth is always to be found more clear in exact proportion to their distance from those who differ from them; accepting also heartily all reasonable explanations, honestly given, of words and phrases misunderstood in controversy, I cannot bring myself to believe that there are not substantial differences in matters of vital moment between our own Church and the Churches, as well of the East as of Rome, which make the restoration of visible unity or corporate reunion with either of them altogether impossible for us.

If the value of religious truth, as it has been revealed by the mercy of God for our guidance, is to be held high above all other considerations, there are substantial differences between our views of such truth and those which are held and set forth by those two Churches, which make any thing but a hollow peace between us impossible, and forbid the thought of our corporate reunion with them to men of plain understandings and upright minds, who have sufficient knowledge of the principles of our own Church and of those Churches, and of the facts respecting our separation from them which history has told us.

Visible unity, if it is to be of any value and to give any reasonable prospect of continuance, must be based upon cordial internal agreement on all

important matters. Nothing but a false peace, certain in the end to delude those who trust it, can be gained by concealing differences, or by representing to ourselves and to other persons that things may, for the sake of visible unity, be treated as indifferent, which, in our moments of sober thought, we really think to be of great importance. "Est quædam pax inutilis; est quoddam utile dissidium."

And here I cannot help taking advantage of the occasion to protest with indignation against the practice, of which we have seen, alas! too many instances, of putting a forced and untrue construction (a *non-natural sense*, it has been called) upon the words of documents of authority, which to men of clear understandings and upright minds appear to admit of no ambiguity whatever. No habit of mind is so fatal to our power of discerning truth as that which allows the misuse and misapplication of words in opposition to the first clear convictions of conscience, whether such misuse and misapplication be made with the view of persuading ourselves or others. No act of treason is more culpable than the indulgence of this habit against the Giver of every good and perfect gift, who has blessed us with inward light δοκιμάζειν τὰ διαφέροντα, and has guarded our use of that light by solemn warnings in Holy Writ against the practice of calling evil good and good evil, and by

injunctions to take heed that the light which is in us be not darkness. No folly can be greater than thus to ruin ourselves; no crime more frightful than thus to bring about the ruin of others.

It would be tedious to enumerate the points of difference which seem to me to make the restoration of visible unity hopeless for us with the Churches whether of Rome or of the East.

We may form some idea of them with regard to the Church of Rome by taking the Creed of Pope Pius the Fourth, which was put forth as the profession of orthodox faith in accordance with the mind of the Council of Trent, and which, according to the principles of a Church which boasts of being "inflexible in dogma," must always remain the standard of Faith for the members of her body. In more than half of that Creed there is hardly a single doctrine which has not been made virtually the subject of protest in our Articles of Religion. We find in it dogmas enforced to be believed as necessary to salvation, both such as are "contrary to God's Word written" and such as are "besides the same." We find in it "fond things vainly invented," things "plainly repugnant to the Word of God and the custom of the Primitive Church," things forbidden which "by Christ's ordinance and commandment ought to be ministered," things ordained as necessary to salvation which "have neither strength nor authority," be-

cause it cannot "be declared that they be taken out of Holy Scripture."

The doctrines and principles of the Church of the East have been expounded with singular clearness by a writer of that communion in a work published in the autumn of last year with special reference to the question of the restoration of visible unity between us [6].

The Church of the Seven General Councils agrees heartily with us in condemning some of the errors of the Church of Rome; such as the denial of the cup in the Lord's Supper to the laity, the doctrines of Pardons and Purgatory and Works of Supererogation. She protests with us against the denial of marriage to Priests and Deacons, and against the assumption by the Pope of supremacy over other Bishops *jure divino*. She rejects with indignation the modern unfounded and anti-Evangelical dogma of the immaculate conception of the Virgin Mary. She gives us credit for the Apostolical succession of our Bishops, though the writer to whom I refer will not allow such succession to be of any value, unless we build upon it the dogma, that the utterances of every properly constituted General Council of Bishops are in the strictest sense of the word infallible.

The Church of Rome, on the other hand, main-

[6] Περὶ τῆς σχέσεως τῆς ἀγγλικῆς ἐκκλησίας πρὸς τὴν ὀρθόδοξον, ὑπὸ N. M. ΔΑΜΑΛΑ. London, 1867.

tains with us the true sense of Scripture as to the double procession of the Holy Ghost, while the Greek Church regards the rejection of the words *filioque* from our Creed as a matter of fundamental importance, and holds the restoration of visible unity with us who maintain the words to be altogether hopeless.

The Greek and the Latin Churches, however, are of one mind in condemning us for our want of faith in the immutability of Traditions, in the adoration of Images and Relics, in the invocation of Saints, in the material propitiatory sacrifice of the Lord's Supper, in Transubstantiation or the change of the substance of bread and wine; though it may be that the word is not accepted by both Churches in exactly the same sense, yet the meaning attached to it by either Church is altogether inconsistent with the teaching of our own Church and open to the protest expressed in our Twenty-eighth Article of Religion.

Both Churches find fault with our assertion that General Councils may not be gathered together without the commandment and will of Princes; and that when gathered they may err, and sometimes have erred, in things pertaining to God.

Both Churches, finally, condemn us in what is after all, perhaps, the greatest point of question—I mean our doctrine of the Church, which does

not allow the authority of infallibility to its continuous living voice. What right have we, they say, in our Provincial or National Synods to put forth Articles of Faith for the members of our communion, and presume to say in such Articles what may or may not be proved by Holy Writ, when such acts of definition can only be done rightly by an expression of the voice of the whole Church in a General Council of Bishops; to which body, moreover, it has been committed to enunciate, from time to time, certain esoteric doctrines or mysteries which have been preserved by the Church from the beginning, but which the Christians of early times did not and could not commit to writing, because only the initiated were allowed to become acquainted with them.

I ask myself, in the view of differences such as these and of the fact that they who would urge us to union have not succeeded in persuading men of authority in either the Latin or Greek Church to meet our advances, except on the terms of our unconditional submission and unconditional surrender of our principles, is there any reasonable prospect of such restoration of visible unity as would allow us all to profess honestly the same Creed, and to join heartily in the same sacred rites of worship? We ourselves must give up what we consider fundamental, or the Churches of Rome and of the East must give up what they consider

fundamental, if there is to be any *corporate reunion* or *visible unity* between us. And if such terms are inadmissible, nothing remains but that we should agree to differ. We must look for our bond of union with those Churches, not in outward acts of intercommunion, nor in the profession of doctrine and the use of customs adopted from them, which are contrary to our Church's law; but in the disposition of mind and heart, which we may hope is common both to them and us, and which leads us to regard with affection all who love our Lord Jesus Christ with sincerity, and to rejoice when Christ is preached, even though it be "of contention;" waiting and looking forward to the Communion of Saints at last, when "the crooked shall be made straight and the rough places plain" in the many mansions of our Father's house in Heaven.

Church and State.

The sketch would be very imperfect which I have tried to represent to myself and to commend to your attention of the causes producing the present feeling of distrust and anxiety, if I did not refer, however imperfectly, to the relations subsisting between our Church and the temporal government of the country.

I speak upon the subject with diffidence, because I am well aware that the questions concerning the connexion of Church and State require for their

handling extensive and accurate knowledge of the history of former days, full information about the origin and growth and actual state of our laws, and such practical acquaintance as quick observation and experience give of the details of social and political life among us.

However boldly, moreover, persons not very competent perhaps for the task are accustomed to speak about them, the questions to be handled are of wide extent and difficult, and are easily seen to involve matter of the utmost moment to our political and social and religious welfare.

Let me at least take up the words of one (Lord Bacon) to whom wise men have long been wont to listen with deference, and ask my hearers to hear "not to contradict and confute, not to believe and take for granted, not to find talk and discourse, but to weigh and consider."

It is well known that one main object accomplished by our rulers in Church and State in the sixteenth century was to establish the right of the nation to settle its own ecclesiastical affairs without interference from any foreign power, and to restore to the Crown of the nation that supremacy in all matters, ecclesiastical as well as civil, which according to "divers sundry old authentic histories and chronicles" had always of right belonged to it. "Regnorum statum," writes Bishop Jewel, in his Apology for the Church of

England, "eo quo accepimus loco sine immutatione ulla aut mutatione retinere, et Principibus nostris majestatem quantum maxime possumus incolumem conservare."

The freedom of Church and State from subjection to any foreign ecclesiastical power, and the Supremacy of the Crown over all persons and in all causes, as well ecclesiastical as civil, were the two main points made good by the efforts of king and people during the reign of King Henry the Eighth; the Reformation of the Church in point of doctrine being left to be completed in the subsequent reigns of King Edward the Sixth and Queen Elizabeth.

The Statutes made by Parliament in that reign, particularly those passed in the twenty-fourth and two following years, are remarkable as the most complete exposition that we have of the constitution of our National Church, and of the relations which bind together the ecclesiastical and civil powers. We are accustomed to refer to these Statutes with pride and confidence as the safeguard of our liberties in the matters to which they relate, and the exponents of the duties of all loyal subjects.

What has been so well and clearly determined by these Statutes has been guarded with care in all subsequent legislation; so that at the present day no doctrine of our Church is more explicit

than that which teaches the Supremacy of the Crown, and no right of the Head of the State appears more firmly settled.

It is the office of the Crown "to render and yield justice and final determination to all manner of folk in all causes, matters, debates and contentions happening to occur within the limits of the empire;" both "the body spiritual" and "the body temporal" in their several "authorities and jurisdictions conjoining together in the due administration of justice, the one to help the other" (24 Hen. VIII. c. 12).

The subjects of the realm, recognizing no superiority under God but the King's Grace only, have been and are free from subjection to any man's laws, but only to such as have been devised, made and obtained within this realm for the wealth of the same, or to such other as by the sufferance of the King's Grace and his progenitors the people of the realm have taken at their free liberty, by their own consent, to be used amongst them, and have bound themselves by long use and custom to the observance of the same" (25 Hen. VIII. c. 21).

Thus no law ecclesiastical is in force within the realm, which has not been made therein by the same authority as that which gives force to all other laws; or else has grown up, by long use and custom, as part of that "ancient collection of un-

written maxims and customs, however compounded or from whatever fountain derived, which is called the common law." No new law can be made binding the people to its observance, no alteration can be made in our standards of doctrine or authorized forms of service, but in the same way as all other laws are made, by the general consent of the nation, expressed by its voice in Parliament.

Again, all Courts for the trial of Ecclesiastical causes are of Royal jurisdiction and authority. The Judges in such Courts must confine themselves strictly to matters of spiritual jurisdiction; their proceedings must be conducted according to legal rules of evidence; their decisions must be governed by well-ascertained maxims of law and by the standards of doctrine and discipline which have the sanction of authority. The right of appeal, also, is given in all cases from the decisions of such Courts to the final determination of the Crown in Council.

The more I consider these principles, whether of Legislation or Jurisdiction, by which our National Church is governed, having regard to the history of our Church and State from the time when the remarkable Statutes upon which they rest were made; having regard, also, to the way in which these principles are put in use at the present time, and to the experience which my own official duties have given me of the inestimable

advantage of being myself governed by clear and well-known laws, while I am called upon to administer the law with authority to others, the more firm is my conviction that these principles are sound and wise and good, conservative in a very high degree of our most valued liberties, whether as Clergymen or Laymen, and of incalculable advantage to the welfare of our country.

I am well aware that there are persons in the present day who do not set the same high value which they appear to me to bear upon the principles and laws by which our National Church is governed. Looking more at the restraints which the Civil Courts and the Supremacy of the Crown seem to impose upon "the body spiritual" than at the solid advantages which the support of the temporal power brings, they sigh for greater liberty of action for the Clergy, not perceiving sufficiently, as it seems to me, the results which would follow from the attainment of their wishes, nor heeding the well-known maxim, that true liberty is safest when confined within the limits of controlling law and order.

To some persons the Supremacy of the Crown is a "hateful term," "wounding the consciences of Christian men," causing "pain and irritation to the most devoted servants" of the Church. The body spiritual of the Church of England, not being free to make law itself, is represented as "well

nigh smothered under the oppressive weight of an almost illimitable [Parliamentary] legislation."

It would be well if they who hear or read such language with complacency would patiently consider the alternative of laws made and administered by the Clergy without the concurrence of the Civil power. Let them look, for example, at the vast mass of Provincial and National and Roman Canon Law, of which happily the full burden was never felt by the people of this country, thanks to the wisdom and courage of our rulers, except in the darkest periods of our history, and from which the blessing of the Reformation has almost entirely set us free.

Many questions no doubt arise continually from the established relations between our Church and State which require very great care in treating, as well on the part of the Clergy as of the Laity. To what extent and in what manner should the voice of the Clergy be allowed to prevail in proposals for new laws or for alterations in established rules and customs? What are the proper limits in special cases between the Ecclesiastical and the Temporal Jurisdiction? What should be the constitution and what the modes of process in our Ecclesiastical Courts? To what counsellors should the Crown be advised to entrust the consideration of Appeals of the last resort in Ecclesiastical cases?

Such questions need only be stated to draw from every one the admission that, if according to the old maxim of wisdom *gladius juvare debet gladium*, the handling of them requires much mutual forbearance and good faith, great moderation of temper and of judgment, and, above all, a simple and earnest desire to do, in the settlement of them, what after full consideration shall appear to be most for the honour of God and the welfare of our people.

I do not think it can be said with justice in the present day that the Civil power of the country is indisposed to give the voice of the Clergy its due weight in all legislation on Ecclesiastical matters; and so long as the opinion of the Clergy agrees in the main with that of the great body of sound Churchmen among the Laity, I see no reason to apprehend that it will fail to command the respect to which it is entitled. In matters which obviously require careful handling a successful result can be expected only when the claims which are urged are reasonable, and the zeal with which they are advocated is governed by discretion.

If, however, after all (which God forbid) it should be the deliberate opinion of the people of this country that the constitution of our National Church should be broken up, that the State should no longer profess any religious creed, that the sanction of the law of the land should no longer

guard our Articles of Religion and our Formularies, that the two Houses of Parliament and the Crown should be relieved from the duty of legislating for the Church, and should occupy themselves exclusively with affairs of temporal interest, looking with indifference at the contentions of rival religious bodies, or interfering only so far as to provide for the enforcement of rules made by every such body for the government of the members of its own communion, it is difficult, I think, to represent to ourselves sufficiently the evils which would follow not only to our own much-loved Church, but to the members of every religious community in our body politic.

I regard not so much the questions which would arise immediately about the disposal of Church goods, the endowments of our Benefices, the material fabrics of our Churches, to what uses they should be applied in future, to which, among many claimants, each pretending to be the true Church, the right of possession should be given, and under what conditions of tenure.

The heats raised by the discussion of such questions may be well imagined. The results which would follow from the settlement of them, whatever the form of settlement might be, may be best followed out in thought by confining our attention to some one parish with which we are well acquainted.

I regard not so much, I say, questions such as these, affecting the temporalities by which our Church is supported in her holy mission; but I look with far greater anxiety at the position which our Clergy would thereafter occupy as the spiritual guides and instructors of the people. The minister of the Church in every parish, if indeed a minister continued to officiate in every parish, would no longer have what has been well called "the right of road to every house;" he could no longer speak with the authority now given to him as the minister of *all* the people; he could only offer his ministrations to those who chose to recognize his office.

The Clergy, moreover, could no longer appeal to the laws of the land for support in their ministrations and for the protection of their just rights. They would have to submit themselves to other tribunals than the Queen's Courts. They must be judged by other laws than such as have been made after free discussion by men of many minds in the great Council of the nation.

I confess that I cannot look without dismay at the picture, which it requires no great force of imagination to draw with some resemblance to truth, of the state of things which the separation of Church and State would bring to pass among us; and in proportion to such feeling of dismay is the pain which I feel in hearing language tend-

ing to this result, not from those who openly profess their desire for the destruction of our Church, but from persons who would complain if they were not reckoned among her chief supporters.

If for some wise purpose, to which we can only submit ourselves with reverence, the Providence of God should permit the separation of our Church and State to be accomplished, I should greatly deplore the injury which our country would sustain thereby in all political and social and moral and religious interests; but, above all, I should regret the displacement of our Clergy individually from the position of independence and authority which they now occupy with so much comfort to themselves in the ministrations of their holy office, and with so much real profit to their people.

If it should be in the counsels of God to bring this calamity upon us, at least let us not deprive ourselves of the comfort of reflecting that we individually have done nothing to promote the designs of those enemies of our Church who are rejoicing at the prospect, nor helped to bring about the confusion which will follow by inconsiderate or impatient or intemperate words or acts, flying to evils that we know not of in our hurry to escape from such as are, to a great extent, imaginary, and which a little more consi-

deration would have convinced us might at least have been endured with patience.

Ritual.

After the several serious and important matters to which I have asked your attention, I am almost unwilling to turn the thoughts of my hearers to the subject of Ritual used in the service of the Church; because it may appear to some that, if the foundation, of faith and doctrine be good, questions concerning Ritual may be treated as of comparatively little value.

The subject of Ritual, however, in the present day has assumed dimensions, if of undue, yet doubtless of alarming magnitude; and the fact is not hard to be accounted for, because Ritual is justly regarded as the outward exponent of doctrine, and is indeed mainly advocated by those who set great value on it because they think that it gives them the means of representing in clear light to others certain truths which they desire to impress upon the people.

The passions of men, moreover, are stirred with greater force by what is presented before their eyes continually in their own Parish Churches than by what they hear of only at a distance, or by what being addressed only to the ear they may learn the habit of regarding with indifference.

Add to these considerations what never ought to be lost sight of by wise and prudent men, even if questions concerning Ritual were a matter of

indifference; I mean "that golden saying of some learned man, most true and certain and confirmed by long experience, that matters of indifference, that is, the question respecting matters of indifference, is the golden apple of discord[7]."

It would not suit with the occasion of our meeting, nor would the time suffice, to enter upon any discussion of the legality or permissibility of certain practices in Ritual, or to refer in more than a general way to the many things which are brought into question on the subject. The whole matter has been so much canvassed, and been made so familiar to us by information conveyed through ordinary channels of communication, that I should only weary you to no purpose if I attempted to occupy your time with details.

The question of the right of the Clergy, according to present law, to bring into use certain rites and ceremonies which have been discontinued for three hundred years is now waiting a final decision in the Court of last Appeal.

The Commission also appointed by the Crown to inquire into all matters relating to the course and conduct of Public Worship have recommended in their first and second Reports the enactment of provisions to maintain the established usage in

[7] Zanchius to Queen Elizabeth, in Zurich Letters, Second Series, p. 349.

the three important matters of vestments, lighted candles, and incense. If these recommendations should be carried into effect, it is hoped that great facility would be given thereby to the maintenance of uniformity in our Public Worship, that much occasion of offence would be removed, and a great advance made in preventing the wishes of a few members of a congregation for the introduction of novel rites from being allowed to impede the devotion of the many.

The appointment of order in Divine Service, says our Church in the excellent Preface "Of Ceremonies" in our Book of Common Prayer, "pertaineth not to private men. Therefore no man ought to take in hand, nor presume to appoint or alter any public or common order in Christ's Church, except he be lawfully called and authorized thereto."

If there is one thing more than another in which the counsel of a Bishop can be of value to the Pastor of a parish, it is to be found in the solution of "doubts that may arise in the use and practice" of Divine Service. The Bishop has the advantage of a large area of supervision, and of acquaintance with persons of many different schools of thought. He is far removed from all local and personal influences, which sometimes disturb the judgment of the minister of a parish, notwithstanding his efforts to guard himself

against them. Moreover, the directions of our Book of Common Prayer oblige him to take order by his discretion for the quieting and appeasing of all diversity that may arise, and for the resolution of all doubts, so that the same order be not contrary to any thing contained in the Book of Common Prayer.

I do not scruple to say, because I am sure that my meaning and my motives will not be misunderstood by my hearers, that much evil would be avoided, if more general advantage were taken of this provision of our Prayer Book; if those of the Clergy who doubt or diversely take any thing in the conduct of Divine Service against what custom has established in their parishes, not restricting the words of our Church in her Preface to the narrowest interpretation of which they are capable, but adopting them in the wide and liberal sense which they were doubtless intended to bear, would resort to the authority on whom is thrown the responsibility of taking order, rather than to the unfaithful guidance of books, the productions of incompetent or designing persons, which are too often destitute of all just claim to authority or value.

In the excellent Preface "Of Ceremonies" to which I have referred our Church explains well and sufficiently the reasons why some Ceremonies were abolished, and some retained.

"All things done in the Church," we are told, ought to "pertain to edification." "Christ's Gospel is not a Ceremonial Law; but it is a Religion to serve God, not in bondage of the figure or shadow, but in the freedom of the Spirit; being content only with those Ceremonies which do serve to a decent Order and godly Discipline, and such as be apt to stir up the dull mind of man to the remembrance of his duty to God by some notable and special signification whereby he might be edified."

"The circumstances and ceremonies of Public Service," writes Thorndike[8], "is indeed a kind of discipline and pædagogy, whereby men subject to sense are guided in the exercise of godliness. It is, as it were, the apparel of religion at the heart, which some think like the sun most beautiful when it is most naked. And so it were, indeed, did men consist of minds alone without bodies; but as long as our bodily senses are manageable to our soul's advantage, the heat within will starve without this apparel without."

And yet there is danger on the other hand lest, as was well said by Walter Haddon in his letter to Osorius[9], "while our outward man is too much busied in the shadows of holy things,

[8] Quoted by Skinner, Plea for the Threatened Ritual, p. 52.

[9] Quoted by Strype, Annals, c. 37.

the inward sense of the mind grow cold, and taking in the unwholesome nutriment of a too gaudy religion lose the true fruit of celestial meditation."

Experience had taught the compilers of our Church Services to look at the matter from both these points of view. They "cut away and clean rejected" what, as Bishop Jewel says, "aut valde superstitiosa aut frigida aut spurca aut ridicula aut cum sacris literis pugnantia aut etiam sobriis hominibus indigna esse videbamus." They retained what appeared to them to conduce to "the procuring of reverence and exciting of piety and devotion in the Public Worship of God."

The rules prescribed by our Church are, as might be expected from such principles, few and simple. But it is plain that in the application and use of any rules for such a purpose a large margin must remain always for discretion. Gestures and tones of voice and small details of ceremony cannot wisely be made the subject of unyielding law. Questions will arise continually in the ministrations of a faithful Pastor, when he will find himself called upon to use discretion or to seek advice; and what we have seen of our Church's mind should teach us in all cases that such advice and discretion should be governed mainly by regard for the spiritual edification of the people.

If we so order our Ritual in things which the law of the Church leaves open as to offend and alarm our people, we defeat the very purpose for which our Ritual is of value. No law of Statutes or Rubrics or Canons can provide sufficiently for the regard which a Minister ought to have for the spiritual profit of his people, or for the wise exercise of authority by Ordinaries, or for due submission to such authority on the part of priests and people. Such things are above and beyond the provisions of written law. They lie within the province of moral and spiritual things, which human enactments cannot touch. They are subject in the forum of conscience to a higher jurisdiction than that of human law, which reigns supreme alike over Bishops and over those who are bound to follow with a glad mind and will their godly admonitions.

I had occasion about two years ago, in answer to memorials addressed to me by certain of the Clergy and of the Laity of the town of Birmingham, to speak of the great and serious evil to be apprehended from the introduction into our Church of practices which have been unknown among us since the period of the Reformation. I thought it my duty to circulate in the Diocese copies of my letters, written in answer to the memorials, because it seemed right that the opinion of the Bishop upon the question should be made known

in his Diocese, and no better opportunity presented itself.

I regret greatly that in the time which has passed since the occasion for the apprehension of evil does not seem to have been diminished. Would that they who think they see edification and value in the practices complained of had observed greater moderation, greater readiness to submit themselves to the voice of authority, greater regard for the opinions and even for the prejudices of the people, who are wont in such matters to adhere tenaciously to what long use has sanctioned,—a fault, if it be one, which may easily be pardoned.

I regret greatly the persistence in the use of new rites and ceremonies which has been shown in some unhappy instances, because it engenders and confirms in the Laity a feeling of distrust against the Clergy, because it diminishes the feeling of cordial good-will which ought to bind together the Clergy of every Diocese and their Bishop, because it discourages and mars the efforts made in many places, hitherto with great success, by persons who are free from all extravagance and heartily loyal to our National Church, to put greater life than heretofore into the Services of our Common Public Worship, and so make them more worthy of the great Object of our worship and of greater efficacy to promote the spiritual profit of the people.

Times of excitement are not good for legislation. When two parties contend with heat (and it is impossible to avoid heat in all controversies of religion) the triumph of one party cannot be borne without impatience by the other. But if in our contentions the counsels of moderation are not heeded; if, as in the days of trouble of the seventeenth century, persons are found to persist in "busying themselves and troubling others with putting forward new rites and ceremonies with scandal and without law, or by using our Church's name without her leave for the serving of their own purposes causelessly bringing an evil suspicion upon her [1]," I see no other solution of the difficulty than by recourse to fresh legislation, to restrict within narrower limits than heretofore the discretion of the Clergy in points of Ritual, to make the law more clear and exact and minute in detail, and to give greater facility of preventing those who wish to go beyond it.

I should regret greatly the necessity for such fresh legislation; but I cannot conceal from myself that the force of circumstances may make it unavoidable. The Rubric on "the Ornaments of the Church and of the Ministers thereof," of which the history is so remarkable, the *litera scripta* of

[1] Sanderson, Sermon ad Clerum, preached at Grantham, 1641.

which has been from time to time the occasion of so much perplexity, which the wise forbearance of our Rulers in Church and State from the beginning and the custom of three hundred years have interpreted so as to leave it without offence to the great body of our people, the retention of which has been fought for strenuously by some on every occasion of the revision of our Prayer Book, and the loss of which would be to many in the present day a matter of deep regret,—this Rubric, I say, will not be allowed to remain to minister strife and irritation. The strong wills of determined men will prevail against it. The desire will be fulfilled, which even the author of "The Unbloody Sacrifice" expressed, when he said, "It is much to be wished that this Rubric were altered by proper authority[2]."

I do not venture to hope that in what I have said of the several important matters on which I have thought it my duty to speak I shall have succeeded in gaining the complete assent of all who, like myself, have devoted time and thought to the consideration of them. Upon some points, no doubt, if not upon all, while to some of my hearers I may appear to have said too little, others may be of opinion that I have said too much.

In every body of thoughtful men difference of opinion upon such matters is unavoidable. As it

[2] Clergyman's Vade Mecum, ch. 4.

is the pride and boast of our Church to encourage the free use of reason and common sense in things pertaining to religion, there is room for many differences of opinion among us, while we all join heartily in the loving use of our Formularies, and devote ourselves together to the practical work of extending the kingdom of our Saviour in the Gospel.

The purpose which I have had in view will be answered, if what I have said shall be blessed by our Heavenly Father to reassure the hearts and minds of some of our brethren, both lay and clerical, by the enunciation of well-known truth, to guide the thoughts of some of my younger brethren in the ministry, to remove misapprehensions, to allay suspicions, and to bind us all more closely together in the holy brotherhood of Christian love.

It is the peculiar advantage of the Bishop of a large Diocese that he is of necessity brought into intercourse with men of different minds and habits of thought; and, having thus the opportunity of looking at things which minister strife from different points of view, is able to compare and balance conflicting views on controverted questions. His affections also of personal regard and esteem being called into exercise over a wide field, while he cannot help sometimes grieving over extravagant statements and wrong views and

expressions of angry feeling, he is yet able to see points of goodness in all which call for love and admiration.

The experience of more than seven years enables me to say with confidence that upon many questions, which seem to separate controversialists by a wide interval from one another, the contending parties are really much nearer together than they think; and that at least in things essential there is much more substantial agreement among men of different minds in our Church than the heats engendered by controversy allow them to perceive.

The knowledge of this fact brings much and welcome comfort. It gives courage and hope in the anxious and difficult times in which our lot is cast, and under the many discouragements by which the patient workers in our Church cannot prevent themselves from being sometimes worried.

"If the Church had been a religious machine," writes Dr. Lightfoot, the present Hulsean Professor of Divinity in the University of Cambridge, in an admirable essay on "The Relations between Jewish and Gentile Christianity in the first Ages of the Church," speaking of the state of Christendom in the Apostolic age, "if the Apostles had possessed absolute control over its working, if the manifold passions of men had been for once annihilated, if there had been no place for misgiving, prejudice, treachery, hatred, superstition,

then the picture would have been very different. But then also the history of the first ages of the Gospel would have had no lessons for us. As it is, we may well take courage from the study. However great may be the theological differences and religious animosities of our own time, they are far surpassed in magnitude by the distractions of an age, which, closing our eyes to facts, we are apt to invest with an ideal excellence. In the early Church was fulfilled in its inward dissensions, no less than in its outward sufferings, the Master's sad warning, that He came not to send peace on earth, but a sword.

Sad, indeed, is the warning which our Lord's words convey to us! Sad, indeed, must always be the thoughts of the student of Church history, when he looks back upon the record, and sees how plainly the prediction has been accomplished!

The view of such things should lead us to rely with more entire submission upon the never-failing Providence and Grace of our Heavenly Father, to refuse to fret and be vexed because we cannot bring all men to see religious truth in the same light as we see it, to rest in the Lord and wait patiently for Him, seeking strength in quietness and confidence, praying, hoping and trusting to see at last the salvation of our God.

If those whom I have the privilege of addressing

here to-day will permit me to say it to them, there is no task of duty so urgent at this time upon all men, especially upon the Clergy, as to "study to be quiet, and to do their own business" (1 Thess. iv. 11). The *steadying force* which the Providence and Grace of God permit us individually to apply to the general course of things in times of trouble is to be found in minding our own work in our own place, and doing our duty in that state of life into which it has pleased God to call us.

It is a happy circumstance for most of us of the Clergy that we are not called upon to take part in controversy; that we are left at liberty, not to criticize and censure the doings of other persons, but to do our own work in our own well-defined sphere of duty, ministering the doctrine and Sacraments and the discipline of Christ, diligent in prayers and in reading of the Holy Scriptures, and in such studies as help to the knowledge of the same.

It was by the efforts of a painstaking Parochial Clergy, established by the endowment of Vicarages out of the possessions of the Monasteries at the close of the fourteenth century, that the seeds of the Reformation of religion were first sown in England. The people of this country will look to the same order of men, and I am sure that they will not look to them in vain, for the

preservation of our Reformed Religion in its purity.

Let us, my brethren of the Clergy, bear in mind always our high calling in the discharge of the trust which is thus committed to us, every one in his own line of duty working quietly, firmly and with patience; every one striving always to fill his whole soul with the thought, "Woe is me, if I preach not the Gospel!"

THE END.

GILBERT AND RIVINGTON, PRINTERS, ST. JOHN'S SQUARE, LONDON.

A CHARGE

DELIVERED TO

THE CLERGY AND CHURCHWARDENS

OF THE

DIOCESE OF WORCESTER,

BY

HENRY, LORD BISHOP OF WORCESTER,

AT HIS VISITATION IN JUNE, 1871.

London,
RIVINGTONS, WATERLOO PLACE;
HIGH STREET, Oxford. | TRINITY STREET, Cambridge.
1871.

A CHARGE,

&c.

My Reverend Brethren of the Clergy and My Brethren of the Laity.

In meeting you to day in Visitation for the fourth time, and after a service of ten years in the Diocese, my first thought leads me to lift up my heart in gratitude to our heavenly Father for the measure of health and strength which He has given me, and for the joy with which He has blessed me in the ministrations of my office.

I do not doubt that such expression of gratitude will find ready sympathy in many of my hearers, whom the goodness of God has cheered with similar blessings, as they have laboured to do with their might whatever in the leading of His good Providence their hands have found to do.

From some of our labours it may not have been given us to see much fruit. Our heavenly Father may have seen it good to chasten us with disappointment. We may have been less earnest in

our work than we should have been. We may have failed to take full advantage of the opportunities which have been given us. Not the less, however, is our gratitude due for the enjoyment of our opportunities, and for the health and strength which might have enabled us to use them to greater profit.

Let our review of the past, and our sense of gratitude for mercies received, urge us to greater zeal and patience in the service of a gracious Master.

The occasion of another Visitation, also, must not be allowed to pass without once more asking my brethren of the Clergy and Laity, as I have always done before, to accept my hearty thanks for their kind co-operation by which I have been encouraged. I am deeply grateful for many marks of confidence and good will, which the last three years have brought me. Such proofs of kindness are very welcome under the sense of manifold imperfections in the discharge of duty, and with the knowledge that in some points, which have been made matters of question, the opinions, which I have been led to form, do not coincide exactly with those of all my brethren. If, as is most certain, it is hopeless to expect perfect unanimity of opinion upon Ecclesiastical and Religious subjects among persons who look at the same thing from different points of view, we may at least give one another credit for good intentions, and for due care and deliberation in forming the judgments at which

we have arrived respectively. The feelings of affection and regard, which the frequent intercourse of a Bishop with his fellow-workers in the same holy cause and under the same Divine Master, cannot fail to create, do not indeed allow him to regard without regret the differences of opinion to which I refer. But I may at least express the hope that I have not failed to show due respect to the opinions of all, with whom I have been brought into intercourse, nor to abstain from unduly pressing my own opinions, nor to follow the straight line of impartial justice in the administration of the affairs which have been officially brought before me.

Let me hope that the same confidence and good will, for the expression of which during the last three years I now declare my gratitude, may not be wanting for my encouragement in the time to come, for which I may be allowed to labour.

Ordinations.

In the five years from 1866 to 1870 inclusive the number of Deacons ordained to serve in the Diocese of Worcester has been 182. Of these persons 149 had been educated in the Universities of Oxford, Cambridge, Durham, and Dublin; twenty-seven had obtained certificates of residence and instruction in Theological Colleges; and six were Literates.

During the first five years of my Episcopate, from 1861 to 1865 inclusive, the number of Deacons ordained to serve in the Diocese of Worcester was 131; of whom 104 were Graduates, twenty-four presented themselves from Theological Colleges, and three were Literates.

The comparison of the numbers thus ordained in two successive periods of five years seems to show the satisfactory result that the number of persons is increasing, duly qualified by education, who seek admission into Holy Orders, and that our Universities continue to be the main source of supply of our Clergy.

It would not be deemed fitting on an occasion like the present to express opinions condemnatory of the course, which it is apprehended that our legislature is about to take in dealing with the governing bodies of our two ancient Universities and their Colleges. It may perhaps, however, be permitted to one, who is indebted to the fostering care of one of those venerable seats of "sound learning and religious education" for all that higher cultivation of mind and those firm principles of religion, without which life is of little value, to express his deep regret that the principle, so full of danger, should be applied to our Colleges, of diverting from their intended purpose institutions established with the encouragement of the State for a good object, and against which it is not pretended to allege that they are not fully accom-

plishing the purpose for which they were established.

It cannot be out of place for a Bishop, in the apprehension of such things, to call the serious attention of the inhabitants of his Diocese to the consequences, which may be expected to follow upon the education of our Clergy from important alterations, in regard to religious teaching and the use of divine worship, in the character and constitution of our Universities and their Colleges. A question of anxious doubt may soon come before us in a form demanding some practical answer, whether our Universities and their Colleges can continue to be, as heretofore, the places above all others where the higher education of our Clergy can be best completed.

Confirmations.

The number of young persons of both sexes confirmed in the Diocese during the last three years was 20,180; the number in the three years immediately preceding the last Visitation having been 16,915.

Not only is this increase of numbers encouraging, as showing increased appreciation of the rite of Confirmation by our people, but it is satisfactory also to have observed, as I am glad to take this opportunity of acknowledging, that the general behaviour of the candidates has been all that could be wished, indicating, as we have reason to infer,

their careful preparation by the Clergy who presented them, and their intelligent knowledge of the nature of the service.

I hope that by adding to the number of opportunities of Confirmation, these good results may be still further increased, for I need not say to my brethren of the Clergy how great is the value of the occasion of a Confirmation in enabling them to obtain acquaintance with the minds of the young people of their cures, and to make upon them permanent impressions of religion.

I am of opinion that for many country parishes the usual rule of a Confirmation once in three years suffices. But I would gladly see provision made in all large towns for annual services of Confirmation; and I readily accept all invitations for special services, whether in town or country, whenever a sufficient number of young persons can be collected for the purpose.

New Churches.

I have had the satisfaction of consecrating twenty-three new Churches in the Diocese during the last three years. Six of these new churches have been built in parishes of large area, with the view of giving opportunities of common public worship to persons living at a distance from their parish churches. It is hoped that these new churches will become fresh centres of spiritual life in their several parishes, though no special

districts have been legally assigned to any of them.

Seven churches have been built to supply the place of other churches, which had been allowed to fall out of repair, or had been found too small to supply the wants of increasing populations.

The remaining ten new churches, having had districts legally assigned to them, have become the churches of new parishes, and are destined, we hope, at no distant day to gather round them severally all the machinery requisite for the due effect of pastoral ministrations, in houses of residence for the Clergy, Week-day and Sunday Schools, and all those associations of mercy which knit together the Clergy and Laity of a parish, every joint supplying something "according to the effectual working in the measure of every part," and so making "increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love."

Besides the consecration of these twenty-three new churches, I have had the gratification of witnessing the completion of extensive repairs and enlargements and restorations of a large number of other churches, which have been put into a state worthy, in point of style of ornament and of substance, of the holy uses to which they are devoted.

I have taken part in the opening services of these Churches with great joy and with great gratitude for the exertions of those who have given

time and thought and money to the work, "not grudgingly or of necessity, for God loveth a cheerful giver."

It is matter of honest pride to all of us that the number of churches is thus diminishing in the Diocese which excite pain and regret in those who visit them, when we think of the holy uses for which they were built, and call to mind how much the effect of those uses is hindered by the indecency of neglect, or the decay by which they are permitted to crumble into ruin.

Though the number of churches in the Diocese is small of which this remark can be made, it must be confessed with pain that instances are not wanting where those who ought to be interested in the maintenance of their churches have failed to show themselves sensible of the responsibility which rests upon them.

Whatever lot the good Providence of God may permit to be in store for our Church in this hitherto favoured country, at least let us not lose the satisfaction of reflecting that we have been not unfaithful guardians of the sacred buildings which the piety of our fathers gave us; that we have done what we could to maintain them, or to restore them, and so give them over to the custody of those who shall come after us, as the legacy of greatest value which can fill their lives with blessing.

Special Services.

I have observed with great satisfaction the arrangements made in a much larger number of parishes than heretofore for special week-day services in the seasons which our Church commends to our observance. I mean services in Advent, in Lent, in the Easter week, in Whitsun week, and on Ascension day, times marking the great events of our Lord's life by which the Divine scheme of redemption was accomplished.

I am glad that opportunities should thus be taken to direct the thoughts of our people with reverence to the main facts upon which the Gospel is established.

In this respect the religious profession of Christians of our day is happily distinguished from that of days gone by, when

> "How oft, when Paul has served us with a text,
> Has Epictetus, Plato, Tully preached!
> Men, that, if now alive, would sit content
> And humble learners of a Saviour's worth,
> Preach it who might."

The religion taught by our Lord knows nothing of morality independent of the Gospel. The precepts which He has given us for the practical conduct of life are unmeaning and impossible, if separated from the doctrines upon which they are established. How could men be persuaded to love their enemies, to bless those that curse

them, to do good to those that hate them, and to pray for those that despitefully use them and persecute them? how could they be followers, or imitators of God as dear children? how could we aspire to be perfect, even as our Father which is in heaven is perfect, if our hearts are not chastened by frequent devout thought upon the affecting truths, which the Gospel sets before us, of the Incarnation, the sufferings, the death, the resurrection and the ascension of our Saviour? I need not say to my brethren of the Clergy that it is of the utmost importance to the due effect of the Gospel upon the lives and manners of their people that our teaching should be based upon those facts, and that all opportunities should be taken to bring them before our hearers at such times and in such manner as may best secure attention.

Sittings in Church.

Cases have been brought before me not unfrequently during the last three years of disputes respecting the right of occupying specified sittings in Parish Churches.

Much difficulty has arisen occasionally from the vicious practice, unhappily encouraged by some show of authority in days gone by, but for which no good reason can be found either in law or in equity, of making seats in churches the subject of sale and bargain.

An important Judgment of the Court of Arches in the autumn of last year upon a case submitted to it from the Diocese of Worcester will have made the law free from doubt even to those who were induced to think that it was not clear before.

"An Act of Parliament alone," said the Judge of the Court of Arches, "can render the sale of Pews legal." He quotes with approbation and re-affirms former decisions of the Court to the effect that "neither the parishioners by their consent, nor the Ordinary, nor any person but the Legislature can deprive the inhabitants of a parish of their general right in parish churches." "Pews in parish churches," he adds, "are not the subjects of private property, but belong to the parish for the use and occupation of the parishioners at large."

Clandestine Marriages.

The experience of the last three years has confirmed my conviction of the unsatisfactory condition of the law respecting the celebration of marriages. It is much to be regretted that no opportunity has been found by our legislature for making improvements in the law based upon the Report of the Royal Commissioners on the laws of Marriage, which was presented in 1868.

Incumbents of country parishes in the neighbourhood of large towns not unfrequently complain that banns of marriage are published for

their parishioners and the marriages celebrated in town churches, when there has been no sufficient residence in the towns of either party.

The law gives the minister of every parish power to require seven days' notice from parties applying for the publication of banns of marriage, together with a statement of their names, places of abode within his parish, and length of residence within such places. But no legal penalties are incurred by the false statement of any of these particulars. The law, moreover, does not give the minister any power to call for or compel any information as to the age, kindred, history, or other circumstances of parties unknown to him.

No really valuable result is attained by the publication of banns; nor does the common system of Licences give any security against improvident or fraudulent or illegal marriages.

It is to be hoped that no long time will be allowed to pass before the excellent Report of the Commissioners, to which I have referred, shall be made the basis of legislation. In the mean time, I wish to express the hope that, in all cases of doubt, the Clergy will take advantage of the seven days' notice allowed before the publication of banns of marriage to inquire, either personally or through some agent whom they can trust, respecting the residence of the applicants within their parishes.

As we pass from the consideration of matters

more or less specially affecting our own Diocese to a wider range of thought, our attention is drawn with great interest to the measures affecting the Church generally, which have been made the subject of legislation during the last three years.

Not only have questions of supreme importance been moved in Parliament during that time, but the Acts passed and now in force cannot fail to have great permanent effect upon the spiritual welfare of our people.

In the year 1868 was passed an Act for the abolition of compulsory Church rates; settling finally a question which had been agitated for many years, and of which the importance was shown sufficiently by the strong feelings which were stirred about it.

In the year 1869 was passed the Act to put an end to the Establishment of the Church of Ireland; and in the year 1870 was passed the Act to provide for public Elementary Education in England and Wales.

It would not be easy to estimate too highly the importance of these three great measures. We may regret that in some respects, many or few, and of more or less importance in the opinion of different persons, they were not different from what they are; or we may grieve that any legislation whatever has taken place upon the subjects of them. But, as the measures have been passed,

we must do the best we can, whether to reduce the amount of evil in them, or to develope what is good, each of us in our own measure and degree according to our opportunities.

Church Rates.

The provisions of the Compulsory Church Rate Abolition Act are too well known to require us to dwell upon them.

No proceeding is to be taken in any court, or before any magistrate, to compel the payment of any Church rate, now made in any parish.

All vestries, however, are empowered as heretofore to make, assess, receive and otherwise deal with any Church rate; those persons only being permitted to inquire into or vote in respect of the expenditure of the monies, who shall have paid the amount for which they are rated.

Two important provisions, also, are enacted. First, that the inhabitants of any new Parish or Ecclesiastical District, being free from any liabilities to the Church rate of the parish or parishes, out of which the new parish or district was formed, may make and assess a rate for the support of their own Church, as if such Church were the Church of an ancient parish. Secondly, that if the occupier of any premises fail to pay the rate for which he is assessed, the owner may pay the same, and shall thereupon stand for all purposes relating to Church rates, including attendance at vestries

and voting, in the place in which the occupier would have stood if he had paid the rate.

I mention these provisions for making and collecting Church rates, because it is of importance that it should be generally known that the recent Act has not abolished the making of Church rates, but simply the power of compelling payment from those who refuse to honour the Lord with their substance by contributing to the maintenance of the fabrics of their Churches, and of the due celebration of Divine Worship.

I desire to call attention also to one provision of the Act, which has not received the consideration it deserves, but the general adoption of which might be made to serve a very important purpose. I refer to the clause which provides for the appointment of a body corporate of Church Trustees, having perpetual succession and a common seal, whose duty should be to accept and hold all contributions given to them for any purposes to which a Church rate is applicable.

The Trustees, to whom such powers are given, are to be in every case the Incumbent and two householders or owners or occupiers of land in the parish, to be chosen from time to time, as vacancies occur, one by the Patron, and the other by the Bishop.

Hitherto I have received applications from only a very small number of parishes in the Diocese for the appointment of such Trustees. Is it too much

to hope that persons, who have at heart the general welfare of the Church or the spiritual good of the inhabitants of particular parishes, will contribute land or money to be held in trust, as the Act provides, for the purposes to which Church rates are applicable, and so help to save our people, perhaps, in time to come from the fatal consequences of their own neglect or inability?

It is not given to us to see the future of our Church in this country (God forbid that we should have such power! for, if so, how could we walk by faith?). But, if we regard rightly the inestimable benefit which we ourselves enjoy from the pious thought of our fathers in providing us with Churches for Divine Worship and with endowments for spiritual purposes, may we not be moved thereby to show ourselves in some degree at least not unworthy followers of their example; trusting to the good Providence, which overrules the doings of men, for the preservation of our benefactions; secure at least in the assurance that, come what may, our charitable work will be favourably accepted by One, who is not unrighteous that He should forget our labour?

As the duties of our Churchwardens in their several parishes have become more anxious and heavy than heretofore in consequence of the passing of the recent Act, those of them who address themselves to the work with zeal deserve the greater thanks, as well from the Bishop, whose

officers he is proud to consider them, as from the Clergy and inhabitants of the parishes in which they serve. I avail myself gladly of the opportunity to express my sense of increased obligation to them; and I am sure that I interpret rightly the feeling of the Clergy when I say that they share with me this sense of increased obligation for the valuable services which the Churchwardens render to them.

The Church of Ireland.

It would be presumption not to be pardoned, if I were to attempt now, in the presence of those who have long since made up their minds upon the matter, any discussion of the principles or policy of the measure for the Disestablishment and Disendowment of the Church of Ireland.

If, as many among us may apprehend, a great error or sin has been committed by divesting the State in one part of the kingdom of all outward profession of care for religion, and by diverting to other purposes endowments dedicated to pious uses, when no abuse of trust could be alleged respecting them which might not have been cured by some less stringent measures, let us hope and pray that the sin may be pardoned and the mischief of the error turned aside by the over-ruling Providence of our heavenly Father, who governs the ways of men according to His pleasure.

The case of the Church of Ireland, however, is

full of warning and instruction with regard to our own affairs in England, which make the study of it full of interest, and of which it would be folly to refuse to take advantage to our own profit.

All rights of patronage in the nomination of incumbents to benefices have been made to cease in Ireland from the beginning of the present year.

All Church property, including the fabrics of the churches, has passed into the hands of Commissioners appointed for the purpose, it being provided only that the holders of property who were in possession of it on the first day of January, 1871, should receive equivalent annuities as long as they continue to do the duty of their several offices.

All Ecclesiastical Corporations, sole or aggregate, have been dissolved.

All the Ecclesiastical Courts of the Crown have been abolished, and all ecclesiastical law, as such, excepting certain provisions of the law of marriage, has been abolished also.

The Church of Ireland, no longer controlled by the State, may hold Synods of any kind, and frame constitutions and regulations at pleasure for the government of Church affairs.

A Church representative body has been incorporated by Royal Charter to hold in trust and administer the future property of the Church according to certain provisions of the Act of Parliament and the directions of the General Synod.

Churches now in use and applied for by the Church body before the first day of June were to be given up to them by the Commissioners without payment, together with all moveable chattels thereunto belonging.

Ecclesiastical houses of residence were to be obtained also on the payment of certain specified sums, together with additional land in certain cases. And the sum of 500,000*l.* is to be paid by the Commissioners to the Church body in consideration of private endowments which are now diverted from their object.

No one amongst us can have failed to watch with eager and unceasing interest the proceedings taken by Churchmen in Ireland to frame a constitution for their future Church according to these provisions. The task has been difficult beyond precedent. It must have awakened lively sympathy in all of us, and called forth many an earnest prayer that the grace of God would bring the labours of our brethren to a successful issue. Experience only can show whether the constitution which has been framed will stand the test of trial, and fulfil the expectations of its framers, and avail to maintain the form of sound words, by which the Church of Ireland has been bound hitherto in close and affectionate union with the Church of England.

The work which has been done, let me repeat, is full to overflowing of warning and instruction

to the Church of England. Would that all the members of our Church would learn the lesson well, and allow it to govern them in what they say and do!

If there is one point prominent above all others in this lesson of warning and instruction, it is beyond all question the vital importance of engaging the counsel and help of the lay members of the Church in all Church affairs, whether of legislation or administration. It would have been impossible to frame a constitution for the Church of Ireland which would have won general confidence, or have given any promise whatever of the future sustentation of the Church, unless the principle had been fully conceded and established of joining the Laity with the Clergy in all Church Councils.

According to the constitution which has been framed, every Parish is to have a select vestry, in which, besides the incumbent and his curates and the two churchwardens, the Laity are to be represented by a number of not more than twelve persons elected annually for the purpose. To this select vestry are committed the control and charge of all Church funds, the care of the fabric of the Church and other buildings, the appointment and control of all Church officers and servants, and the provision of all that is necessary for Divine Service.

Every Diocese is to have its Synod, consisting of the Bishop, the beneficed and licensed Clergy, and at least one Synodsman for every parish; the

parish in every case being entitled to return two Synodsmen for each of its officiating Ministers. The Bishop, the Clergy, and the Laity are to sit together in the Synod for the transaction of all business, and to debate all questions together. If a division be called for upon any question, all the members except the Bishop are to vote together, unless, when the division is called, six members at least of either order present shall require the votes to be taken separately by orders. Special provision is made for the case of the Bishop dissenting from the two orders with respect to any proposed Act of the Synod, the question being submitted in the last resort to the General Synod for decision.

Very large and important powers are entrusted among other things to the Diocesan Synod, with the consent of the Church body, for the union or division of benefices, for altering the boundaries of parishes, and for the constitution of new ecclesiastical districts.

The General Synod of the Church is to consist of three distinct Orders, the Bishops, the Clergy and the Laity; every Diocese returning a specified number of clerical representatives elected by the Clergy, and a specified number of lay representatives elected by the Synodsmen, yet so that the whole number of clerical representatives (208) shall be exactly one half of the whole number of lay representatives (416).

All the members of the Synod are to sit toge-

ther, except in certain specified cases, for deliberation and for the transaction of business. The Bishops are to vote separately from the representatives. The representatives, clerical and lay, are all to vote together, unless, when a division is called, ten members of either order require the voting to be taken by orders.

To the General Synod is entrusted supreme power to make regulations for the order, good government and efficiency of the Church of Ireland; special provision being made for deliberate care and caution in altering the articles, doctrines, rites or rubrics in the formularies of the Church. Every regulation so made becomes thenceforth a law of the Church, and is binding upon all its members.

The object which I have in view does not require me to ask your attention to the provisions made for the nomination of Clergymen for institution to vacant cures, for the appointment of Archbishops and Bishops, and for the constitution of tribunals for the trial of Ecclesiastical offences. I will only venture to remark that the provisions made for these purposes deserve the careful study of all who take interest in Church matters and in the general welfare of our people, or who duly value the pains which have been bestowed upon them.

My object is, as I have already more than hinted, to call the earnest attention of my hearers to the principle, which is easily seen to pervade the whole

constitution of the Church of Ireland, of joining the Laity with the Clergy in all Church Councils. There may be many points of difference between the character of the English and that of the Irish people, as also between the circumstances of the two countries in regard to Church affairs; but I entertain no doubt that the principle of the united action of the Clergy and Laity in all Church matters is of equal force for both England and Ireland, and equally vital for the future maintenance of both Churches. I believe that all efforts to improve our Church legislation or administration must end in failure, which do not fully recognize this necessary principle.

Elementary Education.

I have had the opportunity of speaking in public so often upon the Elementary Education Act of last year, that it is not necessary to trouble my hearers with any remarks respecting it at present. The good hope, which I have ventured to express, of the beneficial effects of the measure has been supported by the constitution and action of the various School Boards that have been appointed. They will very imperfectly represent the feeling, which has been expressed without doubt throughout the country, in favour of the religious education of the children of the poor, if they do not provide for such religious education in their several districts as much as possible.

I must content myself with expressing my hope that in towns and places, where School Boards are put in action, Churchmen will not fail to support voluntary schools also, where, subject to the time table for religious instruction imposed by the Education Act, the principles of the Church of England may be freely taught; or, at least, that increased attention may be paid in Sunday Schools to the training of the young for intelligent service in our Churches. There is no room for doubt that there will be great demand among our poor for such voluntary schools, and it is hoped that the burden will not be great of maintaining them in efficiency, so as to obtain liberal grants from the Education Department of Privy Council.

A special appeal having been recently made to the Diocese for the support of a uniform and efficient system of inspection of schools in Religious knowledge, I need not do more than commend it earnestly to your support, as a measure calculated to be of essential service to the managers of schools in their efforts to maintain the teaching of Religious knowledge in the place of supreme importance which we think it ought to occupy; "ut rudis adhuc et inchoata ætas religionis simul et literarum jactis fundamentis cum sapientia pietatem discat, et regulam habeat in reliquo vitæ cursu quid sentiendum de Deo sit, ad quem omnis vita nostra confertur, et quomodo accepti Deo simus, in quo omnibus actionibus et vitæ officiis

elaborandum est . . . quibus instructi . . . non sibi solum nasci videantur, sed Deo, regi, et patriæ utiles et officiosi sint[1]."

Church Legislation.

Besides the three Statutes which I have mentioned other Acts of more or less interest affecting the Church have received the approval of the Legislature during the last three years. In 1868 were passed the Consecration of Churchyards Amendment Act, and the District Church Tithes Amendment Act. In 1869 the New Parishes and Church Buildings Acts Amendment Act; an Act regulating the residence of Ministers on Benefices belonging to Roman Catholics; and the Bishops' Resignation Act. In 1870 the Ecclesiastical Patronage Transfer Act, the Queen Anne's Bounty Act, and the Clerical Disabilities Act.

Bills also have been brought into Parliament upon several matters of interest to the Church, respecting which, if it cannot be urged that they are of vital importance, it may be said at least that it is not desirable that legislation upon them should be long delayed. One matter may be mentioned in particular, upon which legislation has been far too long delayed, and which may be said with truth to be of great importance to the welfare of the Church; I mean the constitution and proceedings of Ecclesiastical Courts for the trial

[1] Letter of King Edward VI., May 20, 1553.

of offences, and the adjudication of other matters which may be brought before them.

In the Charge which I delivered at my first Visitation in the year 1862, I ventured to call attention to the need of some more satisfactory method of initiating and perfecting measures of Church legislation than what is at present available. Experience has confirmed my conviction of the urgent need of alteration. No one who has watched the course of recent legislation on Church affairs, can have failed to observe the increasing impatience of the Houses of Parliament in dealing with the details of such measures, brought before them often by individual members without any sufficient security that they have the general approval of Churchmen, or have been prepared with due care for the final decision of the Council of the nation. Instead of well-considered measures, dealing largely, liberally and wisely with the matters which they touch, we have too often imperfect fragments of legislation, small matters made the subject of positive law while greater things are neglected, statutes not unfrequently inconsistent with one another, and which are a standing puzzle to administrators.

Is it too much to hope that the entire subject of Church legislation may engage at no distant day the serious attention of our Statesmen? No greater benefit could be given to our Church or to the best interests of the Nation than to put the

course of Church legislation on an improved footing, such as may approve itself to the practical good sense of our people, and win their confidence. Happy for us the day, if the good Providence of God so orders it, when we may have a body, fairly representing the Church, and in which, as a matter not of concession but of right, the Laity shall have their due place; to which shall be entrusted the task of regulating by authority all matters touching the Church within well defined limits, as also of preparing with due care measures which lie beyond those limits, for discussion and final decision in Parliament! Who can doubt that the action of such a body, well and wisely constituted, would provide us at no distant day with measures corrective of many evils by which we are now vexed, giving increased stability and efficiency to our Church, and furnishing us with fresh power to carry the saving health of the Gospel far and wide among our people?

Ecclesiastical Judgments.

Besides the Acts of Parliament which I have mentioned, the time since my last Visitation has been marked by the decision of questions in our Courts of law, to which, though they are undoubtedly of serious character, it is possible that personal and temporary circumstances may have caused to be attributed an exaggerated estimate of value. I refer to the cases of Martin *v.* Mac-

konochie, and Hebbert *v.* Purchas, which have been determined finally upon appeal by the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council.

To many of us the Judgments in these cases will bring relief, as settling by authority from which there is no appeal the legal meaning of Rubrics in our Book of Common Prayer upon points which have been allowed too long to occupy undue attention and to call off the minds of Churchmen from the great work of using the Gospel themselves and commending it to others.

Persons who look at the Judgments from this point of view accept heartily the rule of our Canon, which declares that things "do in some sort alter their nature when they are either commanded or forbidden by a lawful magistrate, and may not be omitted at every man's pleasure, contrary to the law, when they be commanded, nor used when they are prohibited." Neither will such persons forget the grave rebuke given by our 34th Article of Religion to him who "openly breaks" traditions and ceremonies ordained and approved by common authority, as one that "offendeth against the common order of the Church, and hurteth the authority of the magistrate, and woundeth the consciences of the weak brethren."

To others it is well known that some parts of the Judgments have given great pain, as shutting up by a positive unbending decision things about which so much cause has been shown for reason-

able doubt, that they might fairly have been left open. Some of the questions raised are by the confession of all who have studied the subject so surrounded by difficulties that, unless it could be shown that uniformity in such things was essential, many would have been better pleased if advantage had been taken of the acknowledged difficulty to leave some degree of latitude within which the feelings and opinions of different men might have been allowed to guide them to somewhat different conclusions.

My reverend brethren will allow me, I hope, to explain my own conduct in one particular decided by the recent Judgments, upon which, though I do not personally attach importance to it, I am aware that great stress is laid by other persons. I mean the posture and position of the Minister in saying the prayer of Consecration in the service of the Lord's Supper.

It had always been my custom, after ordering the bread and wine in the posture and position of "standing before the table," that is, with my back to the people, to return to the place prescribed by the Rubric at the beginning of the Service and say the prayer of Consecration, as therein directed, "standing at the north side of the table."

If any doubt had been raised in my mind of the propriety of this practice, I should have felt myself justified in continuing it by the great authority

of one to whom it was my privilege to listen as a grateful hearer when he held the office of Margaret Professor of Divinity in the University of Cambridge, and on whose unrivalled accuracy of learning and soundness of judgment I have learnt to place great reliance. In his tenth lecture on "the duties of a Parish Priest" the late Professor Blunt explains the Rubric before the prayer of Consecration by saying that the minister is to stand in front of the table with his back to the people till he has ordered the Elements and prepared them for the rite; interposing his person between the Congregation and the table till whatever is merely mechanical in the act shall have been completed, the Church not wishing to make that meaner part of the service a spectacle. This done, he returns to the north side and breaks the bread and takes the cup "before the people," that is, in their sight, the Church not wishing to make the manner of Consecration, as the Romish priest does, a mystery. "So that they mistake this Rubric altogether," he proceeds, "and violate both its letter and spirit, who consecrate the Elements with their backs to the people after the manner of the Church of Rome. All that they have to do in that position is to order the Elements, so that they may afterwards break the bread and take the cup with more decency."

In delivering their Judgment in the case of Martin *v.* Mackonochie the Committee of Privy

Council declared their opinion that the words "standing before the table" apply to the whole sentence of the Rubric; and though the opinion so given was not in fact a part of the Judgment, I felt myself bound in deference to a Court of such authority to alter my practice, and thenceforth not only to order the Elements, but to say the Prayer of Consecration also, "standing before the table."

In the Judgment recently delivered in the case of Hebbert *v.* Purchas the Court of Privy Council has now authoritatively declared that the opinion expressed in the former Judgment referred to the posture only, and not to the position of the Minister with reference to the sides of the Communion table. The Committee further declare that the north side is the proper place for the Minister throughout the Communion Office, and also while he is saying the Prayer of Consecration; and they advise the Crown that a monition should be issued to the Defendant for standing to break the bread and take the cup with his back to the people, between the people and the holy table.

I hardly need say that, Judgment having been so given, and the meaning having been declared erroneous, which, in common with many other persons, I had attributed to the opinion expressed in the former Judgment, I reverted without hesitation to my former practice.

In mentioning the Judgments to which I have called attention I cannot refrain from expressing

the deep regret and humiliation with which I have witnessed the strong feelings stirred and the large amount of time and money and labour expended upon the questions of which they treat. Our angry disputes and jealousies and suspicions of one another in such matters undoubtedly have the effect of hindering the Gospel. They call off the attention from our great work of paramount obligation, how best to preserve the Christian character of the nation; how most effectually to enlist the energies of Church and State in the support of virtue and religion; how most successfully to fight against and keep in check, if not overcome, the mass of immorality which pollutes our great towns and our apparently peaceful villages; how best to work with the grace of God in extending the kingdom of our Saviour, that His way may be known upon earth, His saving health among all nations.

In looking back at the history of our Church in former days we are apt to wonder that things should have been allowed so much to minister strife, which we have now learnt to regard with indifference, or at least to estimate at their true value. How was it that our fathers quarrelled, and were prepared to fight to the last extremity, about the position of the Communion Table in our churches; whether the people should be compelled to go and kneel at it, or the minister be directed to go and give the Holy Communion to

the faithful in their places; about the use of the Surplice in ministering, the sign of the Cross in Baptism, or the use of the ring in Marriage? Let us hope that the time is not far distant when many things, about which we now vex ourselves unseemingly, shall be treated with the same forbearance. "The servant of the Lord must not strive," except against "offences" which bring "woe unto the world," but which must "needs be" so long as the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and man is very far gone from original righteousness, and is of his own nature inclined to evil.

Besides the Judgments of which I have spoken, another has been given by the Court of Privy Council, upon appeal from the Consistory Court of the Province of York, which cannot have failed to bring encouragement and comfort to many minds among us. The Rev. Charles Voysey has been condemned for the publication of matter inconsistent with the principles and teaching of the Church of England.

The errors attributed to him were of the gravest kind, and such as touch the most essential doctrines of the Gospel; errors concerning the reconciliation of God to man by the sacrifice or propitiation of our Lord Jesus Christ; errors as to the Incarnate Godhead of our Lord and the doctrine of the Holy Trinity; errors as to the authority of Scripture or Holy Writ.

The Courts to which the case was committed

had no difficulty in coming to a clear judgment. The opinions expressed in a bold and defiant spirit were so plainly in contradiction to the well-known teaching of our Church in her Articles and Formularies that it was not possible to consider the condemnation of them doubtful.

Great stress was justly laid by the Court of Final Appeal on the latitude wisely allowed by our Articles of Religion to the Clergy, so as to embrace in one communion all who hold essentially the same faith. It is granted that the mysterious nature of some of our objects of faith must of necessity occasion diversity of opinion. Interpretations of our Articles are not denied to be consistent with due obedience to the law, which by any reasonable allowance for the variety of human opinion can be reconciled to their language. But the Judgment of the Court has happily determined that there are limits within which must be comprehended the faith and opinions of all who minister in our society; and that, unless these limits, however wide, be maintained with firmness, there can be no practical unity of action or hope of concord among the members of the body.

Ritual.

The Commissioners appointed by the Crown in 1867 to inquire into all matters relating to the course and conduct of Public Worship, who at the time of our last meeting in Visitation had issued

their first and second Reports, have now completed their labours, their fourth and final Report having been presented on the 31st day of August, 1870.

The recent Judgments of the Court of Arches and of the Court of Final Appeal seem to have made unnecessary the enactments of fresh legislation, which were recommended by the Commissioners in their first and second Reports for maintaining the established usage in the three matters of Vestments, lighted Candles, and Incense.

There are few among us, perhaps, who do not regard the result of the labours of the Commissioners with disappointment, as being far short of the wants of the occasion and of the reasonable expectations of Churchmen. We may think that a great opportunity has been lost of correcting imperfections in the Rubrics of our Prayer Book, of removing some and adding other directions, which might have promoted uniformity in things essential and increased the good effect of our common Public Worship. We must, however, acknowledge with gratitude the labours of the Commissioners in sifting questions of doubt, in collecting interesting and valuable information, which may be turned to use hereafter, and in elucidating the past history and exhibiting the character of the Church of England.

Though the new Table of Lessons to be read in Churches is at present the only recommendation in the Reports, to which it has been sought to give

effect by the submission of a Bill respecting it to Parliament, it cannot be supposed that the other recommendations will be lost sight of or be allowed to remain altogether barren of result.

It may, no doubt, be questioned with reason whether some provision for reading the Bible in our Churches might not have been adopted, of a much simpler kind than the elaborate scheme framed by the Commissioners after the pattern of that to which we have been long accustomed. It must be acknowledged, however, with gratitude that the measure now under discussion in Parliament is calculated to bring much welcome relief to our Ministers and congregations in directing that portions of the Gospels and of the Acts of the Apostles should be read during part of the year in the afternoon or evening service, in providing a second series of lessons for evening service on Sundays, and also that upon occasions to be approved by the Ordinary other lessons may, with his consent, be substituted for those which are appointed in the Calendar.

It is easy for all of us individually to criticize what has been proposed by the Commissioners in their several recommendations, or to find fault with the constitution of a Commission which did not allow any more perfect result to be obtained. But the real practical want, which the urgency of the occasion makes manifest, is that of some duly authorized Body, similar to what I have ventured

to recommend for Church legislation and administration in general, in which the Clergy and Laity alike should be fully represented, and to which should be committed the task of discussing the whole matter of the several Reports of the Commissioners and of finally determining the form in which proposals for legislation should be submitted to Parliament.

Revision of the English Bible.

Among the many matters of interest which occupy the minds of Churchmen I am not willing to be altogether silent upon one, even in the hasty review to which the time restricts me, of which the issue may be of great moment, reaching far beyond the interests of the Church of England; I mean the task undertaken by a body of English Scholars and Divines to revise the received version in English of the Holy Scriptures.

It is not denied that the version of 1611, which has obtained the name and credit of the Authorized Version, is in the main worthy of trust and accurate. Many of the distinguished persons who have undertaken the task of revision reject altogether the notion of composing a new version, and consider their work to be simply that of perfecting as much as possible the version which we have been accustomed to receive and use with reverence. But it is not easy to foresee the end of such an undertaking, committed as the task has

been to men of different minds and different habits of thought, who are accustomed to look at questions of religion from many different points of view.

No member of the Church of England, who pays due regard to the principle of encouraging the popular study of the Bible as one of the main points of difference which separate us from the Church of Rome, can fail to welcome with approbation every attempt, honestly made, to set forth in a form easily to be apprehended by our people the real meaning of the sacred text. We accept gratefully the labours of our scholars in illustrating and explaining the words, in which the revelation of Divine things has been committed to us. Rich materials for the purpose have been accumulated for many years. The passages of Holy Writ about which competent scholars doubt are comparatively few in number. We have valuable Commentaries to inform the learned and to assist our Clergy in their high task of conveying to those, of whom they are put in charge, the true sense of the lively oracles of God.

Let us hope that the blessing of God may bring the task, which has been undertaken, to a successful issue; that, the painful and humiliating discussions being forgotten by which the commencement of the work has been troubled, a result may be at length produced which shall be a credit to our age and country, and crown with honour those who

have been permitted to labour in it. But let us also hope that our legislators, with whom will rest hereafter the power of giving legal authority to any new or revised Version, will pause and hesitate long before they remove from its place a Version, of which the history is unique; not forgetting, moreover, nor disregarding the fatal consequences of rashly breaking the tie, with which, more than any other bond of union, the possession of a common Bible unites all English speaking Protestants throughout the world, of multiplying sects and parties, and so putting hindrances in the way of religion more fatal than any other by which the Church is threatened.

"Our present version of the Bible," it has been well said by the present Regius Professor of Divinity in the University of Cambridge, "is the work of a Church and not of a man, or rather it is a growth and not a work. Countless external influences, independent of the actual translators, contributed to mould it; and when it was fashioned the Christian instinct of the nation, touched as we believe by the Spirit of God, decided on its authority."

The Vatican Council.

One subject remains upon which, as having occupied the thoughts of most of us during the past year, I am unwilling to let the occasion pass without remark. I refer to the Dogmatic Constitutions or Definitions made by the Vatican Council

at Rome on the twenty-fourth day of April and eighteenth day of July, respectively, of the year 1870.

Circumstances of a political nature prevented the Council from completing its deliberations and treating of all the subject-matter which it was intended to bring before it. But it is held by those who speak with authority upon the subject that the two Definitions, to which I refer, having been "solemnly made, confirmed and published by the Head of the Church in the Council, and promulgated *urbi et orbi*, according to the traditional usage of the Church," are in fact concluded and have become binding upon all men.

The first Constitution *de fide Catholica* among other things, which we of the Church of England may admit and adopt with joy, declares "fide divina et Catholica ea omnia credenda sunt quæ in verbo Dei, scripto vel tradito, continentur, et ab Ecclesia sive solemni judicio, sive ordinario et universali magisterio, tanquam divinitus revelata credenda proponuntur." And again, "Ecclesia per se ipsa . . . magnum quoddam et perpetuum est motivum credibilitatis et divinæ suæ legationis testimonium irrefragabile."

All exercise of the reason or intellect or other natural powers is excluded, by which we might try to satisfy ourselves of the existence of a body gifted with such powers. The Church, we are told, is its own witness, the sufficient evidence of its own

mission to the world; a divine witness ordained by God as the infallible motive of credibility and the channel of His revelation to mankind.

This constitution, says one to whom we are indebted for an authentic account of the proceedings of the Council, is "the broadest and boldest affirmation of the supernatural and spiritual order ever yet made to the world. . . . It declares that this supernatural and spiritual order is present in the world, and is incorporated *in a visible and palpable form*, over which the world has no authority; that God and His operations are *sensible, visible to the eye and audible to the ear*." "I am not aware," he adds, "that in any previous Œcumenical Council the doctrine of the Church, and of its divine and infallible authority, has been so explicitly defined."

The second definition *de Ecclesia Christi* declares "Docemus et divinitus revelatum dogma esse definimus Romanum Pontificem, cum ex Cathedra loquitur, id est, cum omnium Christianorum pastoris et doctoris munere fungens pro suprema sua Apostolica auctoritate doctrinam de fide vel moribus ab universa Ecclesia tenendam definit, per assistentiam divinam ipsi in beato Petro promissam ea infallibilitate pollere, qua divinus Redemptor Ecclesiam suam in definienda doctrina de fide vel moribus instructam esse voluit; ideo que ejusmodi Romani Pontificis definitiones ex sese, non autem ex consensu Ecclesiæ, irreformabiles esse."

The shocking anathema is added, as usual; "Si quis huic nostræ definitioni contradicere, quod Deus avertat, præsumpserit, anathema sit."

We have here not only the statement, which we have been long accustomed to hear, however far from the truth, of the primacy of St. Peter over the Apostles, a primacy of jurisdiction as well as of honour, continued perpetually in the Church, and inherited by the Roman Pontiffs as successors of St. Peter; but the additional dogma, enunciated now for the first time clearly and boldly, of the infallible authority of the Roman Pontiff as the supreme teacher of all Christians.

All doctrine respecting faith or morals, we are told by those who undertake to expound the definition, delivered by the Roman Pontiff personally when he pretends to teach the Church is infallible, whatever may be the judgment upon it of any private student of Holy Writ, or of any number of well instructed scholars addressing themselves to the consideration of it, or of the whole Church, in whatever way its opinion may be gathered. There is no appeal from the personal teaching of the Roman Pontiff to any higher authority. It binds the assent of the Universal Church.

The expression *de fide vel moribus*, we are told, is very comprehensive. It includes truth, as well of the natural as of the supernatural order. It comprehends not only the whole revealed Word of God, but "all that is so in contact with

revealed truth, that without treating of it the Word of God could not be guarded, expounded or defended."

Such things are instanced as the declaration of the Canon and authenticity and true interpretation of Holy Scripture; truths these of the supernatural order, which however are not revealed. Certain truths also of natural science; truths of the natural reason; truths of mere human history, which are not revealed, nor have any place in Scripture or tradition, yet which are so "necessary to the order of faith," that they *must have that infallible certainty*, which human history and human evidence alone cannot give them. In one word, we are told, "it belongs to the Church alone to determine the limits of its own infallibility;" and by the recent definition of the Vatican Council, "what is thus believed by all the faithful in respect of the Church is expressly declared of the Roman Pontiff." His infallibility is a *charisma*, a grace of the supernatural order, *gratia gratis data*, attached to the primacy of St. Peter, and perpetual in his successors.

I have ventured to state the purport of this definition of the Council at greater length than some may consider necessary, because there is reason to think that English Churchmen in general have no sufficient knowledge of the audacity of the dogma, which declares the infallibility of the Roman Pontiff.

Hitherto we have been accustomed to regard the Church of Rome as holding in its extreme sense the doctrine of the indefeasibility of the dogmas of Bishops assembled in General Councils. But now the case is altered. The necessity of the times has compelled another argument and a different mode of action. "Certainly neither in the Old Testament nor in the New," we are told, "have we examples of infallibility depending upon number. . . . The whole evidence of Scripture is in favour of the communication of Divine gifts to individuals. . . . In the order of nature indeed truth may be found rather with the many than with the individual, though in this the history of mankind would give a host of contrary examples. But in the supernatural order no such argument can have place. . . . The whole Episcopate gathered in Council is not infallible without its Head; but the Head is always infallible by himself."

In the opinion of those who thus support the recent dogma, it would seem that the teaching of our Twenty-first Article of Religion is not so far erroneous as we have been accustomed to suppose that the Church of Rome considered it. When General Councils "be gathered together," we say, "forasmuch as they be an assembly of men, whereof all be not governed with the Spirit and Word of God, they may err, and sometimes have erred, in things pertaining unto God."

To all who have considered this dogma of the infallibility of the Roman Pontiff it must have been a matter of interest to learn in what way the supporters of it would deal with the evidence of history concerning it. The answer to the inquiry is most significant.

Persons who deny the dogma undertake to prove that Roman Pontiffs have erred and have led the world into error in matters of faith and morals; and in the absence of sufficient evidence to the contrary they build upon such proof their belief that the claim urged in behalf of the Roman Pontiffs to Divine authority is without foundation. "The true and conclusive answer to this objection," we are told, "consists not in detailed refutation of alleged difficulties, but in a principle of faith, viz. that whensoever any doctrine is contained in the Divine tradition of the Church, all difficulties from human history are excluded by prescription. . . . The city seated on a hill cannot be hid, and is its own evidence, anterior to its history, and independent of it. . . . There is no tribunal to which appeal from the Church can lie. There is no co-ordinate witness, teacher, or judge, who can revise or criticize or test the teaching of the Church. It is sole and alone in the world." The matter of history is human: "human in its mutability, uncertainty and corruption;" but "the Vatican Council affirms that the doctrine of the immutable stability of Peter

and his successors in the faith, and therefore the infallibility of the Roman Pontiff in matters of faith and morals, in virtue of a Divine assistance promised to St. Peter and his successors, is a revealed truth."

It remains to be seen what effect the enunciation of these dogmas will have upon the members of the Church of Rome. Very significant signs have been manifested in many places that the conclusions of the Vatican Council cannot be accepted by reasonable men, notwithstanding a life-long education in habits of submission to ecclesiastical authority.

Among ourselves, who have inherited from "the blessed Reformation" of the sixteenth century freedom from thraldom in spiritual things, and who have learnt to consider it a sinful abandonment of duty not to employ all our natural powers, whether of mind or heart or spirit, in the search for Divine truth, two results seem obviously to follow from the proceedings of the Council. First, the apprehension of danger in regard to all religious faith; and, secondly, the conviction, confirming, let us hope, the allegiance to our own Church of some who have been disposed to waver, that the distance has become wider than ever—so wide as to be altogether impassable—between the Church of England and the Church of Rome.

Not only is the dogma itself of the infallibility of the Roman Pontiff so openly at variance with

well-known facts, that from our point of view it is demonstrably false; but the discussion of the question, especially by those members of the Church of Rome who have dared to speak freely, has brought prominently into light the system of fraud and forgery, elaborated through many ages, upon which the power of the Church and Court of Rome is founded. We look with unutterable sadness upon this system of fraud and forgery, completed and crowned as it has been at length by the monstrous dogma of Papal infallibility. The deep loathing of falsehood, which has been well said to show "the nobler aspect of Protestantism," rises up among Protestants irresistibly against it.

Is there not danger to be apprehended, we may ask, lest some among us, weak in faith, who see the total want of foundation for the dogmas of the Church of Rome, may rush hastily to a conclusion unfavourable to the claims of all religion? Will not the assertion of doctrine, which it is impossible to accept, give point to the ready sneer of the unbeliever against all revealed truth, or make the heart of the righteous sad who ought to be rejoicing in faith and hope, for which he can give a reason?

The supporters of the dogmas tell us that it was high time to put an end to the scandal of intellectual errors and doubts and controversies by the bold assertions which they defend. But

the lessons of history would have told them, if they had been willing to learn, that intellectual errors and doubts and controversies about religion are not to be so silenced; that the remedy proposed only increases the disorder; that all efforts must fail to overcome the unbelief of inquiring men by the simple force of authority, which leaves the judgment unconvinced and the irrepressible longings of the soul of man for truth unsatisfied.

It cannot be denied that danger thus arises from the proceedings of the Vatican Council of increasing doubt and unbelief. And yet if those who pretend to doubt or deny the truth of Revelation are as reasonable as they wish to be considered, let us ask them to acknowledge that the foundation of truth is not to be rejected because a structure of superstition has been built upon it, that our right use of what has been given us ought not to be hindered by the abuse of it, that we are not to cast away the pearl of great price, because we discard the tinsel setting by which it has been disfigured.

The instinct of religious feeling in the soul of man is too deep and too universal to be eradicated. You cannot shake it off from yourself, nor extinguish it in other persons. Little children may be observed to bear witness to it anterior to all teaching. Vicious men may stifle it for a time, and reduce its still small voice to silence. The disputings of men of perverse minds may make

us ashamed to acknowledge it. Crafty men may take advantage of it to erect a structure of superstitious terrors for the accomplishment of their own designs. But the instinct is real and true in all of us. Wise men look upon it with reverence and cherish it with tender care, both in themselves and in others. They try to encourage its promptings and obey its pleadings as it is supported and quickened by the Holy Spirit in the Gospel. It may be made our purest source of joy. It gives life its greatest value, and its highest dignity to human nature.

τι μοὶ ζῆν ἐν κόσμω κένω θεῶν.

Our philosophers and men of science have not failed to observe the perfection of all that is called structure in the world of nature. "Every thing there," said one [1] who had searched successfully and wisely, "so perfect, so curiously fitted, and leading you by little and little to the comprehension of a wisdom so perfect, that I am forced to believe that in the moral world things are not really left in all that disarray which our partial view would persuade us they are."

No possible explanation has been given of the facts which meet our eyes in the moral world, and which make the contemplation of it sorrowful while the study of what is called nature is "infinitely agreeable," other than what the teaching of the

[1] Sir C. Bell, Familiar Letters.

Word of God reveals to us; a "fault and corruption of the nature of every man," propagated from the earliest period downwards, demanding continual checks and remedies, breaking out from time to time every where, notwithstanding the best efforts of law and order to repress it; recovery not only made possible, but brought within the reach of all men, and shown to be real by the lives,—alas! too few and too imperfect, yet enough to prove our point,—of those who are willing to adopt and use the Gospel.

Is it not more than probable, we submit, that the faculties of men, as they are, cannot be made to apprehend spiritual things with that close perception, which may be possible to beings of a higher order, and which we are encouraged to believe will be our lot of joy hereafter? And, if so, is it not also more than probable that the simple images by which spiritual things are represented to us in Holy Writ, give *the nearest approach* which present circumstances allow to the understanding of what will be the object of sight when we meet our Lord in heaven? "Were the curtain lifted further from holy mysteries, man's utter bewilderment would be hopeless."

If sober-minded men will think boldly about religion, let us hope that they will think wisely also, not disregarding the meaning of plain facts, not abandoning the use of right reason and common sense when they think of the things of

God and heaven, but using that right reason and common sense in trying to discover the aim and object of the religious instincts which we have in common, and in seeking, where it may be surely found, the food by which they may be nourished. "*Fortassis inveniet pius pulsator quod temerarius scrutator non posset.*"

If the first result, of which I have spoken, from the proceedings of the Vatican Council brings alarm in the prospect of danger, the second, though not unmixed with sorrow, may be allowed to encourage us with confidence.

It is well known that the longing of many hearts in the Church of England has been directed to the pious hope of healing the breaches of Christendom and of accomplishing the unity which our Lord desired for His Church by *corporate reunion* with the Church of Rome. The dogmas of the recent Council must have extinguished that hope for ever; for it is not possible to conceive that any considerable number of our countrymen will ever so far renounce their whole intellectual character and habits of thought as to follow the Church of Rome in a step, upon which, by virtue of her own most vital principle, it is not possible for her to return.

The occasion will not be lost, if it leads us to revise and correct the theory of the external unity of the Church, "the never-failing theme of Romish controversialists," by which some, who have gone

out from us, have been deceived and led astray, finding, alas! too late, that the unity which they were promised in the Church of Rome was a hollow pretence, representing nothing real.

It is easy to attach too much importance to the advantages of external visible unity in all things among the members of our Lord's Church. The circumstances of different nations, if not of different persons in the same nation, seem to make such visible unity impossible. It is not necessary to that *divine* idea of the unity of the Church, which our Lord sets before His disciples in those chapters of St. John's Gospel, which have been the comfort of believers in all ages.

To look only among ourselves in our own country, can any reasonable person think that our "unhappy divisions," as they are called, and rightly so called while they are allowed to minister sinful strife, will ever cease? Is not the acknowledgment forced upon us every day, as the mass of our people think more earnestly about religion, that every Church which would deserve the name of National must comprehend different shades of opinion among persons of different minds and different training? May it not even be admitted that, within certain limits as to things essential, our differences of opinion are a sign of active life, giving opportunity to all of us to correct from time to time our own ideas and arrive more nearly at the truth? Is it not certain that such

differences of opinion, when they appear to us most sad and perplexing, are in fact a part of that "much tribulation" through which we must enter into the Kingdom of God, trials intended to chasten our spirits by the exercise of forbearance? Are they not really, like other ills of life, a discipline fruitful of good results in promoting "the end of the commandment," which is "charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned: from which some having swerved have turned aside unto vain jangling"?

The thought has often occurred to me in considering the recent definitions of the Vatican Council, as well as other characteristic principles and practices of the Church of Rome, what a remarkable instance is presented to us in them of attempting to walk in the ways of religion by sight and not by faith!

We must have, it is urged, some visible body or person or thing to guide us in our apprehension of the things of heaven. We must have the presence of our Lord's body and blood in the Holy Communion under a form of which our senses can take cognizance. We must have some audible voice to pronounce continually our absolution from sins which we have confessed. We must have some living authority to declare the truth in spiritual things, such as our eyes can see, whose voice our ears can hear, and whom we can approach with questions, whose teaching shall be to

us a guide which cannot lead us wrong, and to which we must bow down and submit ourselves in all things without question.

It cannot have been the intention of the great Ruler of men, we seem to hear the supporters of the Definitions of the Vatican Council say, to leave us to grope our way in the dark, to feel after Him if peradventure we may find Him, to suffer all the anxiety and pain and labour which a conscientious search after truth would seem to impose upon all men, especially upon those who aspire to teach others, if there were no infallible authority upon earth to relieve us from the trouble. We must have something within easy reach. There must be some audible voice to tell us what to think or do, some body or person empowered to give definite, precise and plain directions, acting as the channel of continual fresh Revelations of the will of God concerning us.

What is this, I ask myself, but to determine to walk by sight and not by faith? or at least to bring faith down to the low level of taking upon trust what the living, visible, and audible authority may tell us? We have not so learnt the character of the spiritual things which the Revelation of our Lord has taught us, nor the character of the faith by which they are apprehended. We see human life in all things, and most of all in the things of the spirit, plainly intended to be a life of faith; faith, I mean, which is high and

heavenly, not simply submission to authority which can be made the object of our senses, but faith in authority which is really Divine, and which cannot be made the object of our senses, even in Him "Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto, Whom no man hath seen nor can see, to Whom be honour and power everlasting."

The question will come back to reasonable persons, who have made themselves acquainted with the ways of God with men by study of the Word of God, by wise observation of the course of things about us, and by personal practical submission to Divine teaching, whether a great part of our discipline in life is not to be found in recognising the fact that we have no infallible living teacher among men, in learning to cease from man whose breath is in his nostrils and in leaning only on the hope of heavenly grace. From our point of view the claim to infallibility in spiritual things for any living person or body of persons upon earth is a delusion or an imposture. We must work out our own salvation with fear and trembling. "No man may deliver his brother, nor make agreement unto God for him."

A question of great moment remains, which no one can regard without feelings of overpowering interest, whether of hope or terror. Will not the crowning stone of the fabric of the constitution of the Church of Rome, which the advocates of the

Vatican Council have deemed so necessary for its completion, and regard with so much pride, be in fact the last weight, too heavy for the building, which will make it totter and fall and at length crumble into ruin?

Happy, let us hope and pray, for the world, if the crisis be really come! The immediate result may be full of trouble, giving occasion to the enemy to blaspheme, and overthrowing unstable minds. But let us trust and pray and wait and submit ourselves with patience. The future lies before us hid in mystery. But "the Lord sitteth above the waterfloods, and the Lord remaineth a King for ever. The Lord shall give strength unto His people. The Lord shall give His people the blessing of peace."

GILBERT AND RIVINGTON, PRINTERS, ST. JOHN'S SQUARE, LONDON.

A CHARGE

DELIVERED TO

THE CLERGY AND CHURCHWARDENS OF THE DIOCESE OF WORCESTER

At his Visitation in June, 1874

BY

HENRY, LORD BISHOP OF WORCESTER

London
RIVINGTONS, WATERLOO PLACE
HIGH STREET Oxford | TRINITY STREET Cambridge
1874

My Reverend Brethren of the Clergy, and my Brethren of the Laity—

The time having come once more, when the custom of our diocese requires me to meet you in visitation, I desire, as on former occasions of the same kind, to express my grateful thanks for the kindness with which my ministrations among you have been welcomed during the past three years.

The office of a bishop in our Lord's Church can never be free from care. The interests of other persons, over which it is his duty to watch, are of such great importance; the results which follow from his action, whether in regard to what he does or leaves undone, may tend so much to mend or mar the spiritual condition of parishes; the tone and temper even of his intercourse with the clergy and laity of the diocese affect so much the comfort of those with whom he has to do, that a bishop can never look back upon the past, or look forward to the future, without anxiety.

Moreover, in our own Church of England at the present day so many questions are agitated upon which differences of opinion prevail, that causes of

anxiety seem to be multiplied more than ever. The conduct of a bishop in regard to such questions is sure to be criticised severely. Whatever course he may take in matters of perplexing doubt, he cannot hope to escape blame from one party or another. It happens not unfrequently that he is condemned by both.

Notwithstanding, however, all such causes of anxious care, the review which I am able to take of the last three years is full of encouragement. I look forward to the future with hope and joy, persuaded that the work of a bishop, even in days of trouble, is one of the happiest tasks of labour with which the good Providence of our Heavenly Father can bless a faithful servant. It is matter of great interest and satisfaction to be brought into intercourse continually with men of earnest minds and of active, self-denying effort, engaged in the high and holy work of training the people of a nation in the ways of piety and virtue, and of leading souls onward, under the grace of God, to ripeness and perfectness of age in the life of the glorious Gospel of our Saviour.

Innumerable proofs of such good work present themselves before me, as I review the course of my ministrations during the last three years. New churches built; old churches restored from the results of past neglect to a condition worthy of the pious uses to which they are devoted; chapels and rooms provided in large parishes to be used

under licence for Divine service for the convenience of those who cannot go far from home; increase in the number of services; greater solemnity and care in conducting them; more frequent communions; more assiduous pastoral visiting from house to house, as well of the whole as of the sick; greater withdrawal of the clergy from secular business, and more entire devotion of themselves to the spiritual care of their people; schools built and enlarged for the elementary education of the young, better teaching provided in them, more pains taken with the religious element of such education, improvements of system in the conduct of Sunday schools, together with the frequent use of special Sunday services for children. All these things fill the heart of a bishop with joy, and lead me to congratulate the clergy and laity of the diocese upon the plain evidence of good that is going on amongst us.

Ordinations.

The number of persons admitted into Holy Orders as deacons for cures in the diocese during the last three years has been 122, a little larger than the number (114) admitted in the three preceding years.

Of these persons ninety-six were graduates, twenty had obtained certificates of residence and instruction in theological colleges, and six were literates.

A system of preliminary examination of candidates for Holy Orders has been commenced this year, under the management of a council consisting of the Divinity Professors of the University of Cambridge, elected representatives of the theological faculty of that University, and the examining chaplains of certain bishops who are willing to take advantage of the system.

It is hoped that the institution of a general examination for all dioceses in such subjects as test the intellectual and literary qualifications of candidates may tend to raise the level of attainments among our clergy generally, and act beneficially also on theological colleges by supplying a standard, external to themselves, to stimulate and direct the studies as well as to test the proficiency of their students.

I have not hesitated to express my cordial approval of this effort, and to undertake to recognise the results of this preliminary examination in my admission of candidates for Holy Orders.

I am glad to know also that the Council of Queen's College, Birmingham, have adopted the Cambridge preliminary examination of candidates for Holy Orders as the final examination for students in the theological department of that college.

Confirmations.

The number of persons confirmed in the diocese during the last three years has been 17,510, con-

siderably less than the number (20,180) confirmed during the three years immediately preceding the visitation of 1871, and this notwithstanding a large increase in the number of churches in which services of confirmation have been held.

I am glad, however, to bear testimony to the general good preparation of the candidates, so far as a bishop has the means of judging from the behaviour of those who are presented to him. If the increase in the number of churches in which confirmations have been held has not increased the number of candidates, it has promoted beyond all doubt the efficiency of the services, and has at least given me the opportunity, which I value greatly, of more frequent and intimate communication with the clergy and people of the places visited.

Church Extension.

The work of building new churches, and of enlarging and improving the accommodation in old churches, has gone on with undiminished vigour during the last three years. Besides the reopening of our cathedral, which we have all witnessed with great joy, I have attended a great number of services in all parts of the diocese to celebrate the completion of such good works; and always with increasing admiration of the style and character of the work done, as well as of the cheerful self-denying efforts of the clergy and others in defraying the cost of it.

I desire to express my hearty thanks to all who have laboured to originate or carry forward such pious and charitable works.

I desire also to use this opportunity to commend to the more liberal support of all the people of the diocese the three Church Extension Societies which have been established for the archdeaconries of Worcester and Coventry and for the town of Birmingham respectively. The funds placed at the disposal of these societies are very inadequate and altogether unworthy of the resources of the people among whom their work is done. When we consider the great encouragement given by these societies to all local efforts for the increase of church accommodation, it is not too much to expect that every parish in the diocese should do something in every year, whether by a parochial association or by a collection in church, for the benefit of one or other of these three societies.

Action of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners.

One of the greatest difficulties of our Church in the present day is to supply sufficient church accommodation and sufficiently frequent church ministrations in our large towns.

Another difficulty, which is felt far more severely and more generally than many of us think, is the want of sufficient provision for the maintenance of the clergy in poor benefices.

Great encouragement is given to local effort for the supply of these two great wants by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners in their wise administration of the funds entrusted to them.

They offer endowments, to the amount of 200*l.* a year in every case, to a limited number of new churches in every year, to which districts shall have been legally assigned containing a population of not less than 4,000 persons. They offer also grants to a large amount in every year to meet benefactions given for the better endowment of poor benefices, whether in the way of perpetual annuities or by the provision of houses for the residence of the clergy. Our diocesan societies do what they can to help applicants for such grants; but, owing to the small amount of funds at their disposal, we are not able to take full advantage of the benefits which the Commissioners offer.

Elementary Education.

The elementary education of the young in their several parishes can never fail to be an object of vital interest to our people; and it has been clearly proved by ample discussion of the subject that, in the judgment of the great body of the nation, no instruction is worthy of the name of education which does not comprise, as one of its main elements, the teaching of religion.

I am sanguine enough to believe that the pros-

pects of good education for our children were never so hopeful as they are at the present time. Praiseworthy efforts have been made in all parts of the diocese to provide sufficient school accommodation for the children of the poor, and to improve the teaching. The Elementary Education Act, 1870, has produced, among other things, the result of bringing a large number of voluntary schools under Government inspection. In seven years before the passing of that Act the average number of schools yearly seeking Government inspection for the first time with a view to annual grants was 492. In the year immediately preceding August 31, 1872, there were no less than 1530.

This submission of our voluntary schools to Government inspection seems to me to be a great gain; for though it is true that the efficient teaching secured by such inspection relates only in the first instance to secular instruction, yet it is certain that such efficiency of teaching affects greatly the intellectual capacity of the children, and prepares them for efficient teaching in subjects of religion also.

But the measure which above all others has given life and force to the religious teaching in our schools has been, beyond all question, the appointment of paid diocesan inspectors, who go from place to place to examine the children, and test the teaching of religion in the schools they are allowed to visit, recommending good

systems of instruction, advising the managers and teachers, and encouraging the pupils. "Money could not be more reproductively spent in the interest of religious education," writes the Church Inspector of training colleges in his last Report, "than in payments for diocesan inspection. What the English Church owes already to the staff of diocesan inspectors appointed in the last two or three years it would be difficult to estimate." We have been singularly fortunate in this diocese in having secured for the inspection of our schools in religious knowledge the services of two gentlemen, not only fully competent for the work entrusted to them, but who have so commended themselves to all by the wisdom of their counsel, and by their skill and diligence, that their visits are looked forward to with pleasure by managers and teachers and pupils, and are universally acknowledged to be of great value. The number of schools visited by our diocesan inspectors in the year ending August 31, 1873, was 547, belonging to 308 parishes. A comparison of the results of inspection in that year and in the preceding year shows that, whereas, in the first of the two years, out of 499 schools inspected, 133 were declared to be good; in the second year, out of 547 schools inspected, no less than 247, or fully one half of the whole number, were found worthy to be classed as good. Again, whereas, in the first year, 208 schools, out of 499, were classed as

inferior in religious knowledge; in the second year only sixty-five, out of 547, were found to deserve that character. "No school," the inspectors say, "has been accounted to be good, unless the requisites as to Holy Scripture, the Catechism, and the Liturgy have been creditably fulfilled." The great improvement thus happily found to have taken place is due, in the opinion of the inspectors, to the adoption of *a regular system of instruction, diligently maintained during the first hour in the morning attendance, by means of which the subjects prescribed in the diocesan syllabus are satisfactorily prepared.*

The annual examination of pupil teachers forms another part of the work done by the diocesan inspectors, upon which it would be difficult to set too high a value. My brethren of the clergy, and other managers of schools, will allow me to ask their attention to the great need which is found to exist for the more adequate instruction of pupil teachers in religious knowledge. While the candidates who passed the examination last year were arranged in three classes of excellent, good, and fair, it was found that no less than eighty-nine out of 449, or 20 per cent., failed altogether to pass the examination.

The Church Inspector of training colleges reports a similar result in his examination of candidates for admission, who have been chiefly pupil teachers. Out of 1800 persons examined in 1873, no less than

318, or 17⅔ per cent., failed to satisfy the examiner. He speaks, however, hopefully of the effect of annual examinations of pupil teachers in religious knowledge throughout their five years' course by diocesan inspection. "If only," he writes, "we can sustain this system of paid diocesan inspection, we shall soon cease to hear that the religious attainments of our young teachers are retrograding." "We cannot be too continually reminded," he adds, "that the religious effect of our schools depends twentyfold more on the religious character of our teachers, than on the greater or less amount of time which the exigencies of a national system may allow to be devoted to directly religious lessons. A really Christian man will turn out really Christian children, however cramped he may be by what is called or miscalled the religious difficulty."

At the date of the last Report of the Committee of Privy Council on Education (June 30, 1873), the number of School Boards in the diocese of Worcester was seven—five in municipal boroughs and two in country parishes, all such School Boards having been formed at the request of the inhabitants. It is satisfactory to know that in all these cases, except the town of Birmingham (which has gained an unenviable notoriety in this respect), the Boards have adopted, as a thing of primary importance, the teaching of religion in all schools under their direction. The course of instruction

includes at least the study of the Bible, with such simple explanations of its language and allusions as shall make its meaning intelligible to the young, power being reserved, of course, as the Education Act requires (and yet a power which we are told is hardly ever put in use), for the withdrawal from such study of any children whose parents object to their receiving this elementary knowledge of our common faith.

The effect of the action of School Boards in country parishes generally remains yet to be seen; for owing, it would seem, to the great pressure of work in the Education Department of the Privy Council, School Boards have not yet been established in those parishes which, for various reasons, have not been able to fulfil the requirements which the Education Act imposes. It is probable that there will not be many such School Boards in the diocese of Worcester, though there are places of importance where, whether from past neglect, or from the indifference or inability of the people to help the education of their poorer neighbours, nothing but the establishment of a School Board will avail to make sufficient provision for the purpose. In every such case the minister of the parish will, no doubt, be placed at a disadvantage, as he labours to train the young persons of his cure in the ways of piety and virtue. All distinctive Church teaching being excluded from the Board school, he must direct his attention to the

greater efficiency of his Sunday school. He must provide short Sunday services, such as the law now permits, for the special use of children. He must encourage home teaching by the parents, and avail himself of opportunities to aid and supplement their efforts.

Hitherto our task of duty, for clergy and laity alike, in the matter of elementary education has been clear. We have everything to encourage us in following that clear path of duty. We need not distress ourselves by trying to look too far into the future. Let it suffice for me to express the conviction that no faithful member of our Church, whether lay or clerical, can ever cease to regard the religious education of the young as a thing of first importance. Come what may hereafter in regard to Government aid for schools, no effort will be spared by many among us, at whatever cost of self-denial, to maintain good schools where religion may be taught, as we have learnt to know and value it, and to encourage the children of our poor neighbours to come and take advantage of it.

Recent Legislation.

Since the time of my last visitation several Acts of Parliament have been passed affecting the action and welfare of the Church of England. The Incumbents' Resignation Act, 1871, and the Dean and Canons' Resignation Act, 1872, will afford

welcome relief to many who feel themselves unable to discharge the duties of office with efficiency and satisfaction. The Bishops' Resignation Act, 1869, which was only a temporary measure, has been continued still, as a temporary measure, for three years from the end of the session of 1872. I presume that no one, looking at the acknowledged duties of a bishop in the present day, would contend that no provision of a permanent character is wanted to facilitate the resignation of bishops, though it seems that the Legislature has not been able to settle with satisfaction to itself the conditions under which bishops, yielding to the pressure of infirmity or age, should be permitted to resign their office. Five cases only have as yet occurred in the diocese in which incumbents have taken advantage of the provisions of the Resignation Act.

The Ecclesiastical Dilapidations Act, 1871, has laid the foundation of permanent and great good. The process of putting the Act in operation will, no doubt, show the need of amendment in some of its provisions, but the benefits to be derived from it directly and indirectly are great and obvious. An accurate account will be kept in the Diocesan Registry of the buildings belonging to every benefice. Secure provision has been made for the maintenance of them in good repair, and opportunities are given for improvements in the way of alteration or removal.

The personal attention which I have been able to give to every case has satisfied me that the diocese has been fortunate in the selection by the archdeacons and rural deans of two very competent and painstaking surveyors. No case has occurred in which I have had occasion to put in force the provision of calling in a second surveyor, and in almost every case the report has been confirmed without alteration or objection. In sixteen cases the buildings have been inspected at the request of the incumbents. In fifty-eight cases the surveyors have inspected upon vacancies, and in no less than twenty cases of vacancies, alas! there were no buildings for inspection.

Besides the Prayer Book (Table of Lessons) Act, 1871, further effect has been given to the recommendations of the Commissioners appointed by the Crown, in 1867, to inquire into all matters relating to the course and conduct of public worship, by the Act of Uniformity Amendment Act, which received the royal assent July 18th, 1872.

My brethren of the clergy are aware that much practical help has been given them by the provisions of this Act. A shorter Order for Morning or Evening Prayer is thereby authorized to be used on any day except Sunday, Christmas Day, Ash Wednesday, Good Friday, and Ascension Day. Upon any special occasion, approved by the ordinary, a special form of service, approved by

the ordinary, may be used, provided that there be not introduced into such service anything, except anthems or hymns, which does not form part of the Holy Scriptures or the Book of Common Prayer. An additional form of service is authorized for Sundays and holy-days in any church in which are also said on the same day the Order for Morning and Evening Prayer, the Litany, and such part of the Order for the Administration of the Lord's Supper as is required to be read on Sundays and holy-days if there be no Communion. Provision is also made for the use, as separate services, if occasion requires it, of the Order for Morning Prayer, the Litany, and the Order for the Administration of the Lord's Supper, with or without Communion.

I have readily given my assent to the use of special forms of service for special occasions which have been submitted to me, as also to additional forms of service for Sundays, but I have not thought it consistent with the intention of the Act to issue any such forms by way of recommendation by authority.

An Act of great importance was passed in the last Session of Parliament for the constitution of a Supreme Court of Judicature, to which appeals in ecclesiastical causes in the last resort are to be referred hereafter. Her Majesty's Court of Appeal constituted by that Act, when sitting as an ecclesiastical tribunal, is to be composed of such,

and so many of the judges thereof, and is to be assisted by such assessors, being archbishops or bishops of the Church of England as Her Majesty may, by any general rules made with the advice of the judges of the said court or any five of them (of whom the Lord Chancellor shall be one), and of the archbishops and bishops who are members of Her Majesty's Privy Council, or any two of them (and which general rules shall be made by Order in Council), may think fit to direct. Power of objecting to such general rules is given to each House of Parliament during forty days, for which it is provided that the said general rules should be laid before it.

In days when, as at present, almost every person considers himself competent for the work of legislation, it is not to be supposed that the constitution of any court of appeal, however formed, should escape hostile criticism. I will content myself with saying that, in my judgment, the tribunal so to be constituted as the highest ecclesiastical court of appeal is worthy of entire confidence, and such as ought to insure the ready submission and respect of all who may be affected by it. The province of such a court being, as is well understood, not to settle matters of faith or determine what ought to be in any particular the doctrine of the Church of England, but simply to consider what is by law established to be the doctrine of the Church of England upon the true and

legal construction of her articles and formularies, it is satisfactory to know that we shall have the decision pronounced by judges the most distinguished in ability that the country has, trained in the profession of the law, and accustomed to administer justice, assisted also by ecclesiastics of the highest rank, whose long acquaintance with theology and with the distinctive teaching of the Church of England give weight and value to their counsel.

Let us hope that the judgments of such a court may be received with due submission, and that at least we may be spared in future the pain of hearing remonstrances urging persons in authority to abstain from acting upon the decisions of our courts, or of witnessing open acts of disobedience on the part of those who ought to be the first to set an example of obedience to others.

The Reformation of the Church of England.

It will not have been forgotten by my hearers that a remarkable memorial was presented last year to the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, signed by more than 60,000 lay members of our Church, many of them persons whose opinions are entitled to great respect. The memorialists declared their sincere attachment to the doctrines, order, and ceremonies, as generally set forth in the Articles and Liturgy of our Church, and their

resolution to retain unchanged the distinctive truths that were restored to us at the Reformation.

Referring to recent decisions of the Supreme Court of Judicature in ecclesiastical causes with regard both to the ceremonial prescribed and to the doctrine maintained by our Church on the subject of the Lord's Supper, the memorialists appealed to the Archbishops, and through them to all other rulers of our Church, to use all faithful diligence to banish and drive away all erroneous and strange doctrines contrary to God's Word, and both privately and openly to call upon and encourage others to the same.

In the reply of the Archbishops, they represent that there is without doubt cause for the apprehension of real danger in the desire of a considerable minority, both of clergy and laity, amongst us to *subvert the principles of the Reformation.* The Archbishops add that they feel justified in appealing to all reasonable men, whether the very existence of our national institutions for the maintenance of religion is not imperilled by the evil of which the memorialists complain.

It is matter of grave moment that such alarm should be expressed by the Archbishops of our two provinces, whose position gives them the means of extensive acquaintance with what is going on. My own experience in the comparatively limited sphere of the diocese of Worcester leads me to think that the minority among us, whether clergy

or laity, who are trying to subvert the principles of the Reformation, is very far from being considerable; though I am by no means inclined to undervalue the danger of such an effort, however small the number of persons who are engaged in making it. As far as my means of observation and inquiry extend among professing members of the Church of England in this diocese, I am happy to believe that the great mass of our people, both clergy and laity, is strictly loyal to the principles of the Reformation, and that they are prepared to contend earnestly for the faith, as our fathers of the sixteenth century have restored it to us.

Private Confession and Absolution.

The Archbishops, in their reply, also make mention of a petition then recently presented to the Convocation of the Province of Canterbury by 483 clergymen, in favour, among other things, of what they call Sacramental Confession.

My attention was called to that petition by resolutions passed at a public meeting in Birmingham, in which the petition was represented to be a most reprehensible attempt to undo the great work of the Reformation, and by urging in particular the introduction of the Romish doctrine and practice of sacramental and auricular confession, and sacerdotal absolution, to cause a serious danger to the Church and State of England.

The petitioners prayed, as my hearers will be well aware, that provision may be made for such changes in the Order for the Administration of Holy Communion as may bring the service into closer accordance with *the ancient Liturgy* of the Church of England, and particularly with the service contained in the first Prayer Book of King Edward the Sixth; for the reservation of the Blessed Eucharist; for the use of unction with consecrated oil in Holy Baptism and Confirmation, as well as in the Visitation of the Sick; for the education, selection, and licensing of duly qualified confessors; and for other things of a like tendency.

In my reply to the Chairman who presented the resolutions, it was impossible that I should not express my agreement with the meeting in considering the petition, in which such things were asked for, as an attempt to undo the great work of the Reformation of the Church of England. I took advantage of the occasion also to point out what appears to me to be the true position of our Church with regard to the systematic use of confession and absolution in private, a practice which, in the present day, as well as in the sixteenth century, is calculated to move, more perhaps than any other practice which was deliberately laid aside by our Reformers, the aversion and indignation of the people of this country.

I believe that the practice which the petitioners thus seek to revive is unknown to a very large

majority of the clergy of the Church of England, and that instances are rare indeed where, under a faithful ministry which duly sets forth the necessity of repentance and the forgiving mercy of our Heavenly Father in the Gospel, any demand is made by well-instructed members of the Church for such private confession and absolution as are imposed on all its members by the discipline of the Church of Rome.

God forbid that it should be supposed that the Church of England does not allow and even encourage the most free and full communication in all spiritual matters between a minister and his people; that it should not be regarded as the duty of every minister of our Church to fulfil the vow of his Ordination by using both public and private ministrations and exhortations, as well to the sick as to the whole within his cure, as need shall require and occasion shall be given; to put in use at such times the power with which his sacred office invests him of declaring and pronouncing, with the authority of a Divine commission, the absolution and remission of sins to all who truly repent and unfeignedly believe the holy Gospel, and by "comfortable words" of Holy Writ to bind up the broken-hearted, to comfort those who mourn, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness.

The practice which our Reformers rejected, and

which the great body of our clergy and laity at the present day condemn, has nothing in common with such private ministrations as our Church encourages. It is built upon the assumption which underlies the doctrine of the Sacrament of Penance in the Church of Rome, that sin after baptism cannot be forgiven, except upon private and personal absolution, after confession, by a priest. It encourages exaggerated and false notions of the power committed to a priest by ordination. It cannot fail to be demoralizing, as well to the persons who make the required confessions as to the priest who hears them. It tends to fatally mislead those who are encouraged to adopt it, by leading them to look *for direction* more to weak and fallible men than to the ever-present ministrations of the Holy Spirit, and by substituting a routine of enumerating offences before man, without any adequate contrition, in place of that deep prostration of soul, which shrinks from human observation, before One unto whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid.

The true principle of our Church, in the matter of private confession and absolution, is best seen by comparing the more ancient formularies with what was finally adopted afterwards.

The Liturgy of the Use of Sarum, which was generally adopted before the Reformation, contained in the office for Holy Communion no forms

of general confession and general absolution, such as were introduced into the Prayer Book afterwards, the confession and absolution of the communicants having been already done in private.

The Ten Articles (1536), and the *Book of the Institution of a Christian Man* (1537), put forth by authority in the reign of King Henry the Eighth, as true statements of the religion of the Church of England, represent confession to a priest to be necessary to attain certain faith respecting God's mercy and goodness. "The people may in no wise contemn this auricular confession, which is made unto the ministers of the Church, but they ought to repute the same as a very expedient and necessary mean, whereby they may require and ask this absolution at the priest's hands . . . . to the intent that they may thereby attain certain comfort and consolation of their consciences." "The absolution given by the priest was instituted of Christ to apply the promises of God's grace and favour to the penitent."

An important step for the discouragement of private confession and absolution was made in the first Prayer Book of King Edward the Sixth (1549), by introducing in the office for Holy Communion forms of general confession and general absolution in the same words as those in use at present.

In the exhortation to Holy Communion, moreover, in the same office, the person whose con-

science is troubled is invited to come to the priest and confess, and open his sin and grief secretly, that he may receive comfort and absolution of the priest as of the minister of God and of His Church, "requiring such," it is added, "as shall be satisfied with a general confession not to be offended with them that do use to their further satisfying the auricular and secret confession to the priest: nor them also which think needful and convenient for the quietness of their own consciences particularly to open their sins to the priest, to be offended with them that are satisfied with their humble confession to God and the general confession to the Church."

A further step for the discouragement of private confession and absolution was taken in the second Prayer Book of King Edward the Sixth (1552), by introducing the general confession and absolution in the services for daily Morning and Evening Prayer, whereas in the first Prayer Book the Lord's Prayer formed the commencement of each service.

Moreover, the Prayer Book, as then revised and as it now stands, has made important changes in the exhortation of the Communion office. The passage defending the use of auricular and secret confession to the priest is omitted. The word priest is changed into minister of God's Word. For the words, "confess and open his sin and grief secretly," are substituted the words, "open his

grief." The words, "receive comfort and absolution of us as of the ministers of God and of the Church," are changed into, "by the ministry of God's Holy Word receive the benefit of absolution."

In the exceptional case of sickness the Order for the Visitation of the Sick directs, that if the sick person feel his conscience troubled with any weighty matter, he shall be moved to make a special confession of his sins; and that the priest, after such confession shall absolve him, if he humbly and heartily desire it, in a specified form of words. It is to be noted, however, that whereas the first Prayer Book contained the direction that "the same form of absolution shall be used in all private confessions," in all subsequent editions of the Prayer Book this direction is omitted; such omission intimating, it would seem, that all other private confessions of sin than in time of sickness were abolished, or that the use of the specified form of absolution is to be restricted to the case for which it is provided.

"It standeth with us in the Church of England," writes Hooker, "thus; the minister's power to absolve" (that is, as he takes pains to interpret the force of "private ministerial absolution," to "declare remission of sin," not to *make*, as the Romanists say, but to *declare* innocent) "is publicly taught and professed. The Church not denied to have authority either of abridging or enlarging

the use and exercise of that power. Upon the people no necessity imposed of opening their transgressions unto men, as if remission of sins otherwise were impossible, neither any such opinion had of the thing itself as though it were unlawful or unprofitable, save only for those inconveniences which the world hath by experience observed in it heretofore. And in regard thereof the Church of England hitherto hath thought it the safer way to refer men's hidden crimes unto God and themselves only; howbeit not without special caution for the admonition of such as come to the Holy Sacrament, and for the comfort of such as are ready to depart the world."

Gradual Progress of the Reformation.

It cannot have escaped the notice of those who have read the writings of persons who make it their business, as it is said, to "subvert the principles of the Reformation," that they are wont to refer for the teaching of the Church of England, not simply to the formularies now authorized by law, our Articles, our Book of Common Prayer, and, though of less weight, our homilies and canons, but to other documents and formularies also of earlier date, such as our courts of law no longer recognise. Such writers refer continually, for example, to the first Prayer Book of King Edward the Sixth as still representing the doctrine

and usages of the Church of England. They quote the formularies of faith put forth in the reign of King Henry the Eighth as still expressing the mind of our Church since the Reformation has been completed. Some desire to go back even further still, and admit the authority of the false doctrine and ceremonial puerilities of the Liturgy of the Use of Sarum. Persons are found amongst us prepared to contend that from the time of the Ten Articles of 1536 downwards there is "a continuous identity" in the theological statements put forth from time to time by the Church of England, that whatever apparent opposition there is in them is only an opposition of words, that a sound Church, like that of England, could not send forth any doctrinal statements which are inconsistent with the doctrine of the Church universal, and that we are to look at the whole series of such documents and formularies as the real standard of doctrine in the reformed Church of England.

To any one who will take the trouble of comparing the documents and formularies put forth in the early stages of the Reformation with our authorized formularies of the present day, it will be abundantly evident that this theory of "continuous identity" is altogether without foundation. If the question were not too serious for levity, it would be sufficiently amusing to observe the difficulties against which the maintainers of this theory have to struggle. The truth is, that a careful

examination of the series of documents in question shows a continual change, not indeed uniformly in one direction, for the minds of men in those days of trouble were swayed by many motives, but a change leading upon the whole gradually to the position in which the Church of England has been finally established. The documents and formularies of our Church, put forth after our breach with the Court and Church of Rome, can only be regarded properly as a series of efforts to get rid of error and make sure the ground of truth. The eyes of those who undertook the work, one after another, were opened only by degrees. Unless we adopt the theory of an infallible Church, all the statements of which at all times are necessarily true, the process of good reformation in ecclesiastical matters, as in all other things, must of necessity be slow. If anything is to be found of what is human in the enunciation of doctrine and in the arrangements of discipline, by which a national church is ordered, what one generation of men establishes in these respects must always be open to revision by other generations afterwards. Happy they who like ourselves seem to have reached a safe landing place, where we may make a firm stand and rest and be thankful. "After it had pleased God," writes Archbishop Cranmer, "to show unto me by His Holy Word a more perfect knowledge of His Son Jesus Christ, from time to time as I grew in knowledge of Him

by little and little I put away my former ignorance, and as God of His mercy gave me light, so through His grace I opened my eyes to receive it, and did not wilfully repugn unto God and remain in darkness."

A review of the several stages through which the reformation of religion in the Church of England passed may be made to serve two important purposes. It will satisfy the careful inquirer that the result obtained, having been brought about by cautious care and wisdom, is of very great value; and by the comparison of doctrines and usages accepted at different times, it supplies plain proof of the status and principles of our Church as finally established.

"Nothing can argue more strongly," wrote the late Professor Blunt in his *History of the Reformation*, "the sound and sober principles upon which the Reformation proceeded than its gradual advance. It was not, we find, without patient investigation and the successive abandonment of every false position, as it proved itself to be such, that it ultimately attained the strong ground from which it has never since been dislodged."

Our present position also is made clear by looking, as well at what was from time to time deliberately rejected, as at what has been finally kept and is now positively stated.

It will not be without interest or use at the

present time to point out one or two particulars in which the gradual advance of the Reformation is worthy to be noted.

The First Prayer Book of King Edward the Sixth.

It is often argued by those who seem to prefer the doctrine and ritual of the first Prayer Book of King Edward the Sixth to what we have in our present Prayer Book, that the Act of Parliament which prescribed the use of the second Prayer Book commends the first Book as "a very godly Order, agreeable to the Word of God and the Primitive Church, very comfortable to all good people desirous to live in Christian conversation, and most profitable to the estate of this realm." It is stated also truly that the same Act describes the divers doubts for the fashion and manner of the ministration of the service which had arisen, as due rather "to the curiosity of the minister and mistakers," than to any other worthy cause.

It is, however, to be noted that the Act also describes the new Book of Common Prayer as set forth not only "for the more plain and manifest explanation thereof," but also "*for the more perfection* of the said Order of Common Service in some places where it is *necessary* to make the same prayers and fashion of service more earnest and fit to stir Christian people to the true honouring of Almighty God." The Book, also, is said to have

been "faithfully and godly perused, explained, and *made fully perfect.*"

A close examination of the two Books shows many important differences, indicating a clear advance in the second Book, from what the Church rejected, towards the doctrine and usages which were finally determined. The second Book, for example, leaves out what had been retained in the first Book as to the reservation of the consecrated bread and wine in the Holy Communion; together with the direction for the celebration of Holy Communion and all prayers for the dead at funerals. It leaves out, also, all that seemed to give colour to the doctrine of a sacrifice in the Lord's Supper, and to that of a mysterious change in the elements of bread and wine consequent upon consecration.

Fasting Communion.

Another instance of the gradual advance of the reformation of religion in the Church of England may be observed in the usage of receiving the Holy Communion fasting.

It is well known that great stress is laid upon this usage by the Church of Rome. In answer to the question in the Catechism of that Church, "What is required of us when we receive the Blessed Sacrament?" one part of the answer to be given states that "We must be fasting from mid-

night." "This," it is said, "is a law of the Church." "The rule is very strict; you must not take anything to eat or to drink, neither food, nor drink, nor medicine, after twelve o'clock at night exactly, if you are going to Communion in the morning. If you chance to forget and take food, you must put off your Communion to another day." "You need not, however," it is considerately added, "have any scruples about cleaning your teeth or rinsing your mouth; even if you were to swallow a drop of water unintentionally in that way, it would not interfere with your Communion, because it would not then be taken as food or drink."

The *Book of Necessary Doctrine and Erudition*, prepared by the Convocation of Canterbury, and published by King Henry the Eighth in 1543, declares it to be a law of the Apostles and the Universal Church, being moved with the Holy Spirit, "that the Sacrament of the Altar should always be received of Christian people when they be fasting, and before they receive any bodily sustenance, except it be in case of sickness or necessity," and that, too, it is remarked, "although Christ, at the first institution of the Sacrament, did consecrate and give it to his disciples at supper, after they had eaten the Paschal Lamb."

Our present Articles of Religion and rubrics and canons are silent upon the subject. No allusion whatever is made to the practice of fasting before Communion in our Order for the Adminis-

tration of the Lord's Supper. No particular time of day is fixed or recommended for the service by authority, though until recently the practice was almost universal of administering the Lord's Supper at the conclusion of the Morning Prayer.

The necessary inference from this silence leaves our clergy at liberty to administer the Holy Communion at any time of day which may be thought most conducive to edification, and leaves every member of our Church also at liberty whether or not to attend the Lord's Supper fasting.

To many persons the long preceding service of Morning Prayer is a most welcome introduction to Holy Communion, leading the thoughts heavenward, and preparing us for the highest point of devotion in the Lord's Supper. By others the most profitable time is found in the early morning, when the spirits are refreshed by sleep, and before the pressure of the daily distractions of earthly care and business. Nor should we hesitate, I think, to administer the Holy Communion in the evening when occasion seems to require it, as in large towns, the occupations of family life leaving no other time so free for the enjoyment of quiet in devotion. Many who have tried the practice of evening Communions have often assured me that the effect of them is highly beneficial, and that the loss of them would be felt, especially by the poor, as a great and irreparable evil.

My reverend brethren will allow me to say

that I think all these considerations should be duly weighed in fixing the number and times of administration of the Lord's Supper. The people of our parishes have a right to such opportunities of attending the Lord's Supper as, after full consideration of personal and local circumstances, appear most conducive to edification. We individually have no right to close what the authority of our Church has left open. If any of us would represent it to be a law of our Church to receive the Holy Communion fasting, we are stating what the truth does not warrant. If we would say that the taking of Holy Communion without fasting is a sin, we are giving countenance to a grievous error touching one of the great points of difference between our Church and the Church of Rome; an error founded on a totally wrong view of the nature of the Lord's Supper, and of the process by which the faithful communicant eats and drinks our Lord's body and blood in it; an error which obscures the purely spiritual character of that process, and at least favours the notion of such carnal eating and drinking as our Lord condemns in the sixth chapter of St. John's Gospel.

There is no merit or advantage in receiving the Holy Communion fasting, other than what may arise from the effect of fasting upon our power of apprehending spiritual things more clearly and firmly than after eating. To some persons the habit of fasting undoubtedly gives such power.

With others, it is well known, the effect is of an opposite character. Fasting diminishes their power of apprehending spiritual things, and so tends to mar the effect of the service of the Lord's Supper. "Whether ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." Let the dictates of common sense prevail to persuade the faithful Christian to take food, or to abstain from food, before Holy Communion, in such manner and degree as may best make the body a good servant to the spirit in our endeavour to apprehend that for which we also are apprehended of Christ Jesus.

Non-communicating Attendance at the Lord's Supper.

I desire to call the attention of my hearers to one other matter in which the gradual progress of our Reformation is worthy to be noted.

The most prominent mark which distinguishes the practical observances of religion in the Church of Rome from those of our own Church is the rule of hearing Mass. "The Mass," we are told by Roman Catholic writers, "is the very soul of all Catholic worship and devotion." Sundays are to be kept holy, says the Catechism of the Church of Rome, "by hearing Mass and resting from servile works." "The Mass," we are told, "is not a form of public prayer. You do not go to Mass to join in the words which the priest is saying, but to take

part in the action which he is doing. The essence of hearing Mass is devoutly to join with the priest in his intention of offering sacrifice . . . . . You can hear Mass well by making use of any prayers you like . . . . . You may be at a distance, not able to hear a word, and yet you may join in the sacrifice in the most perfect manner."

The *Book of Necessary Doctrine and Erudition*, in the time of King Henry the Eighth, refers to the custom then prevalent, by saying of the Holy Communion, "whensoever they receive this Sacrament themselves, or be present when it is ministered or used, as specially in the time of Mass."

The first Prayer Book of King Edward the Sixth not only allows, but seems to require the people to hear Mass. The rubric at the end of the service for "the Supper of the Lord and the Holy Communion, commonly called the Mass," directs every man and woman "to hear and be at the Divine Service in the parish church where they be resident, and there with devout prayer or godly silence and meditation to occupy themselves;" and again, another rubric after the offertory sentences in the same service directs "so many as shall be partakers of the Holy Communion shall tarry still in the quire" (which it seems the people entered to offer to the poor man's box "near unto the high altar") "or in some convenient place nigh the quire . . . . all other that mind not to receive the Holy Communion shall depart" not—

out of the church but—"out of the quire, except the ministers and clerks."

In the second Prayer Book of King Edward the Sixth, as in all subsequent editions of the Book of Common Prayer, this last mentioned rubric is omitted; but it is to be observed, that in all these editions the rubric which had directed the people to "offer to the poor man's box" is changed into one directing the churchwardens or others to "gather the donations of the people and put the same into the poor man's box," or "bring it to the priest to be put upon the Holy Table."

Moreover, the second Prayer Book of King Edward the Sixth, as well as the Prayer Book of Queen Elizabeth, in 1559, directs the curate in his exhortation at the time of Holy Communion to reprove the people for standing by "as gazers and lookers of them that do communicate," and not being themselves partakers. Such persons are told rather to depart and give place to them that be godly disposed.

In the Prayer Book of 1662 this part of the exhortation is omitted; and it is no unfair assumption to suppose that the reproof was no longer needed, because the custom of non-communicating attendance had then ceased.

So long, it would seem, as the ministration of the Lord's Supper was regarded as a sacrifice offered by the priest, the people were encouraged to come to witness what was done, but not ex-

pected to communicate. Hearing Mass was a duty binding every member of the Church at all times, as it is now regarded in the Church of Rome. But when in the course of the reformation of religion the service of the Lord's Supper was brought back to its original use, as a communion of the faithful at God's board, there was no reason why any but communicants should be present at it.

Although our Church has forbidden the celebration of the Lord's Supper by the priest alone, directing that there shall be no celebration except there be a convenient number to communicate with him, we have no positive order forbidding the presence of non-communicants. It may even be admitted that the structure and order of our service are still such as to allow the presence of non-communicants. And yet the natural sense of propriety has not failed to prevail among us, to which the exhortation of the Prayer Books of 1552 and 1559 appealed. Persons who do not intend to communicate have abstained from coming to the administration of the Lord's Supper; or if the service of the Holy Communion followed immediately after other service, they have habitually departed out of the church before the bread and wine were consecrated.

The revival of the practice of non-communicating attendance at the present time can only be regarded as favouring notions of the Lord's Supper which our Reformers deliberately rejected, and so far

an attempt to undo the great work of the Reformation of religion which it has been the glory of our Church and nation to accomplish.

I have called the attention of my hearers to the questions of fasting Communion, and of non-communicating attendance, because they are of much practical importance at the present time; and it is desirable that the true principles of our Church respecting them should be seriously considered. But it is easily seen that matters of this kind, in common with many observances of Ritual which now seriously threaten the peace and welfare of our Church, have their origin in doctrines respecting the Lord's Supper, which from the point of view in which our Church regards them must be said to be erroneous.

It would be of little use to correct errors in the "manner of ceremonies" if the "matters of faith" from which they spring are left upon a wrong foundation.

In his *Defence of the True and Catholic Doctrine of the Sacrament of the Body and Blood of our Saviour Christ*, Archbishop Cranmer writes respecting superstitious ceremonies and usages: "The rest is but branches and leaves, the cutting away whereof is but like topping and lopping of a tree, or cutting down of weeds, leaving the body standing and the roots in the ground. But the very body of the tree, or rather the roots of the weeds, is the Popish doctrine of transubstantia-

tion, of the Real Presence of Christ's flesh and blood in the Sacrament of the Altar, as they call it, and of the sacrifice and oblation of Christ made by the priest for the salvation of the quick and the dead. Which roots, if they be suffered to grow in the Lord's vineyard, they will overspread all the ground again with the old errors and superstitions."

The signers of the petition to which I have referred have the courage to state three doctrines in particular as "in exact accordance with the formularies of the Church of England."

1. The Real Presence of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ in the Holy Communion under the form of bread and wine.

2. The adoration due to Him there present.

3. The sacrifice which He there offers by the hands of His priest to the Divine Majesty.

It may assist my readers to test the accuracy of this statement of "exact accordance" if I mention the conclusions to which I have been led respecting it by a review of the gradual progress of our Reformation in these particulars.

The Sacrifice of the Mass.

In the Liturgy of the Use of Sarum we find, as might be expected in a service used before the Reformation, a full expression of the doctrine of the sacrifice in the Holy Eucharist.

In the Canon of the Mass, as it is called, immediately after the consecration of the bread and wine the priest offers in the name of himself and of the people unto the Most Excellent Majesty of God a pure host, an holy host, a host immaculate, the holy bread of eternal life and the chalice of everlasting salvation.

He prays that God would vouchsafe to look with propitious and serene countenance, and to accept them as He was pleased to accept the gifts of His righteous servant Abel, and the sacrifice of the patriarch Abraham, and that which His high priest, Melchizedek, offered to Him, a holy sacrifice, a spotless victim.

He prays further that Almighty God would command these things to be carried by the hand of His holy angel to His altar on high in the sight of His Divine Majesty.

A considerable interval is then allowed to pass before the communicant partakes of the consecrated elements.

Again, immediately upon retiring from the service the priest is directed to pray in a loud voice before the midst of the altar, "Let the performance of my homage be pleasing to Thee, O Holy Trinity; and grant that this sacrifice which I unworthy have offered up in the sight of Thy Majesty may be acceptable to Thee, and through Thy mercy be a propitiation for me and all those for whom I have offered it."

In the first Prayer Book of King Edward the Sixth it is directed that *immediately after the consecration* of the bread and wine, the priest should offer a prayer of oblation as follows: "We Thy humble servants do *celebrate and make here*, before Thy Divine Majesty, with these Thy holy gifts, the memorial which Thy Son hath willed us to make . . . . entirely desiring Thy Fatherly goodness mercifully to accept this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving . . . . And here we offer and present unto Thee, O Lord, ourself, our souls and bodies, to be a reasonable, holy, and lively sacrifice unto Thee . . . . and although we be unworthy through our manifold sins to offer unto Thee any sacrifice, yet we beseech Thee to accept this our bounden duty and service, and command these our prayers and supplications by the ministry of Thy holy angels to be brought into Thy holy tabernacle before the sight of Thy Divine Majesty."

The difference between this prayer and the prayers in the Use of Sarum is sufficiently obvious, as a first great step in the Reformation of the service.

The Communion then follows, as in the Use of Sarum, after a considerable interval.

In the second Prayer Book of King Edward the Sixth remarkable changes are made, which have been kept through all subsequent editions, and are still found in our present Prayer Book.

The word "Mass," which had been retained as

the title of the service in the first Prayer Book, is to be found no longer. The Communion is made to follow *immediately after the consecration* of the bread and wine, no oblation or prayer of any kind being interposed between the consecration and the Communion. When all have communicated, *the elements of bread and wine having been consumed*, the priests and people say the Lord's Prayer; and then follows the prayer of oblation, as it may be called, in which we find no longer any mention of the memorial, as in the first Prayer Book, celebrated and made with God's holy gifts before His Divine Majesty. Our Church retains only the sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, and the reasonable, holy, and lively sacrifice of our souls and bodies.

Moreover, whereas in the prayer of consecration of the first Book the priest is directed to say that our Lord has commanded us to *celebrate* a perpetual memory of His precious death, and to pray that our merciful Father would, with His Holy Spirit and Word, vouchsafe to bless and sanctify His gifts and creatures of bread and wine, that they may be unto us the body and blood of His most dearly beloved Son Jesus Christ; we have in the second Book, and in all subsequent editions, a direction for the priest to say that our Lord has commanded us to *continue* a perpetual memory of His precious death, and to pray that we, *receiving* our merciful Father's *creatures of bread and wine, in remembrance of His death and passion*, may be partakers of His

most precious body and blood. In the form of delivery also of the consecrated bread and wine, the new words are added: "Take and eat this in remembrance," "Drink this in remembrance." The memory of our Lord's precious death is to be in the heart and mind of the communicant, not in any supposed memorial offered to the Divine Majesty.

Could anything show more plainly than this short review of comparison the present principle of our Church respecting the sacrifice in the Lord's Supper?

The Real Objective Presence.

Let us apply the same process briefly to the doctrine of the Real Objective Presence.

In the Sarum Liturgy, immediately before communicating the priest is directed to pray privately, holding the host with both hands, to God the Father, who willed that His only begotten Son should descend for us to this lower world, and take our *flesh*, "*which I unworthy*," he is told to say, inclining towards the host, "*here hold in my hands.*" He is also to say to the body, bowing down before reception, "Hail through all eternity, most holy *flesh of Christ* . . . . may the body of our Lord Jesus Christ be to me, a sinner, the way and the life." Likewise, before communicating himself in the blood, he is to say to the blood with great

devotion, "Hail through all eternity, heavenly beverage."

The Ten Articles of 1536 and the *Book of the Institution of a Christian Man,* require all bishops and preachers to "instruct and teach the people committed unto their spiritual charge, that they ought and must constantly believe that under the form and figure of bread and wine, which we there presently do see and perceive by outward senses, is verily, substantially, and really contained and comprehended the very self-same body and blood of our Saviour Jesus Christ, which was born of the Virgin Mary and suffered upon the cross for our redemption; and that under the same form and figure of bread and wine the very self-same body and blood of Christ is corporally, really, and in the very same substance exhibited, distributed, and received unto and of all them which receive the said sacrament."

The *Book of Necessary Doctrine and Erudition* (1543) teaches the same doctrine. "In this most high Sacrament of the altar the creatures which be taken to the use thereof as bread and wine do not remain still in their own substance, but by the virtue of Christ's word in the consecration be changed and turned to the very substance of the body and blood of our Saviour Jesus Christ."

In the first Prayer Book of King Edward the Sixth the terms Body and Blood are no longer applied to the consecrated Elements, but they are

called respectively "the Sacrament of the Body of Christ," and "the Sacrament of the Blood." "Then shall the priest first receive the Communion in both kinds himself . . . . and when he delivereth *the Sacrament of the Body of Christ*, he shall say to every one these words, The body of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was given for thee, preserve thy body and soul unto everlasting life. And the Minister, delivering *the Sacrament of the Blood*, and giving every one to drink once and no more, shall say, The blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was shed for thee, preserve thy body and soul unto everlasting life."

In the second Book further and remarkable changes were made in this matter. The words "Sacrament of the Body" and "Sacrament of the Blood" are no longer applied to the consecrated Elements. "Then shall the Minister first receive the Communion in both kinds himself . . . . and when he delivereth *the bread*, he shall say, Take and eat this *in remembrance* that Christ died for thee, and feed on Him *in thy heart by faith* with thanksgiving. And the Minister that delivereth *the cup* shall say, Drink this *in remembrance* that Christ's blood was shed for thee, and be thankful."

In the Prayer Book of 1559, and in all subsequent editions, the words *bread* and *cup* have been retained; but the addresses made by the minister to the communicants combine the forms used in

both the first and second Prayer Books of King Edward the Sixth.

I ask again, could anything show more plainly than this short review of comparison the position gradually taken by our Church with regard to the doctrine of the Real Objective Presence in the Lord's Supper? "Transubstantiation," says our Church, finally, in the 28th Article of Religion, "or the change of the substance of bread and wine in the Supper of the Lord, cannot be proved by Holy Writ; but is repugnant to the plain words of Scripture, overthroweth the nature of a sacrament, and hath given occasion to many superstitions. The body of Christ is given, taken, and eaten in the Supper only after an heavenly and spiritual manner, and the mean whereby the body of Christ is received and eaten in the Supper is faith." And so the rubric at the end of our Communion Office: "The Sacramental bread and wine remain still in their very natural substances, and therefore may not be adored, for that were idolatry, to be abhorred of all faithful Christians. And the natural body and blood of our Saviour Christ are in heaven and not here, it being against the truth of Christ's natural body to be at one time in more places than one."

My hearers will pardon me for quoting a passage upon this highly important subject from the writings of one who had studied it through all his mature life with the most entire self-sacrifice

and love of truth, and to whom the Reformed Church of England owes a larger debt of gratitude than to any other person. In a letter written to Queen Mary six months before his martyrdom, Archbishop Cranmer thus expresses his last ripe judgment on the question. Having described the doctrine of the Church of Rome (which, he says, "hath neither truth nor comfort") as representing that there are two bodies of Christ, one natural in heaven, another in the Sacrament which "goeth into the mouth with the form of bread, and entereth no further than the form of bread goeth, nor tarrieth no longer than the form of bread is by natural heat in digesting, so that when the form of bread is digested that body of Christ is gone; and forasmuch as evil men be as long in digesting as good men, the body of Christ by their doctrine entereth as far and tarrieth as long in wicked men as in godly men." "It seemeth to me," he proceeds to say, "a more sound and comfortable doctrine that Christ hath but one body, and that hath form and fashion of a man's true body, which body spiritually entereth into the whole man, body and soul; and though the Sacrament be consumed, yet whole Christ remaineth and feedeth the receiver unto eternal life if he continue in godliness, and never departeth until the receiver forsake Him. And as for the wicked, they have not Christ within them at all, who cannot be where Belial is. And this is my

faith, and, as me seemeth, a sound doctrine according to God's Word, and sufficient for a Christian to believe in that matter."

Loyalty to the Church of England.

My reverend brethren will not mistake my meaning if, in the clear view of the teaching of our Church in these matters, I venture to remind them of the promise made by myself and them at the time of our Ordination to give our faithful diligence always so to minister the doctrine and sacraments and discipline of Christ, as this Church and realm hath received the same according to the commandments of God; and of the declaration also solemnly made by every person licensed to officiate in sacred things. "I believe the doctrine set forth in the Thirty-nine Articles and in the Book of Common Prayer to be agreeable to the Word of God; and in public prayer and administration of the sacraments I will use the form in the said Book prescribed, *and none other*, except so far as shall be ordered by lawful authority."

How can such promise and declaration be held consistent with teaching and practices of which we now and then hear with pain, and for which it must be said that there is no authority whatever in our formularies or in the prescribed form, even if they are not actually contrary to what is ordered? The patience of pious and intelligent members of our congregations is sorely tried by

such teaching and practices. Demands are loudly made upon persons in authority to repress them; and if existing powers are insufficient for the purpose, to ask from the Legislature of the country such addition to those powers as may be enough to meet the evil.

Many things, moreover, in the conduct of public worship are left to the discretion of the officiating minister, in the reasonable hope, no doubt, that such discretion will be wisely used with regard to personal and local circumstances in every parish.

If it be found that every now and then the minister of a parish uses his discretion unwisely, and takes advantage of his position to alter established customs and press his own views offensively upon an unwilling people; or that he persists either in doing what the law forbids or in leaving undone what it orders, I see no cure for such faults of lawlessness or indiscretion other than by fresh legislation to shut up within narrower limits the discretion allowed to the clergy individually, to make the law of our rubrics so plain and simple that it cannot be mistaken, and to provide more prompt and easy means of securing obedience to what the law has ordered.

Reports heard on all sides seem to show that in the opinion of the great body of our people the occasion for such legislation has now fully come. I wish I could persuade myself that our existing processes for legislation in ecclesiastical matters

were such as to promise a result deserving the good will and confidence of all our people.

In the meantime some measure at least seems to be urgently required for putting an end to open and persistent violations of plainly declared law, without recourse to the cumbrous and costly processes of our existing Church Courts.

If I may venture to speak of the measure which is now under consideration in Committee by the Upper House of Parliament, I would say that the progress already made in amending the first Draft of the Bill before them is encouraging and satisfactory. The appointment of a single Ecclesiastical Judge, of high position and attainments, for the determination in a summary way of questions concerning the regulation of Public Worship in all Dioceses throughout the kingdom, is a welcome change from the present practice.

If, further, the area can be limited within which such questions may be brought for judicial determination; and if a power of discretion can be reserved for the Ordinary to prevent the unnecessary raising of questions even within that area, I am sanguine in the hope that a measure may receive the sanction of the Legislature which shall deserve general confidence, and enable the bishop to assume his proper position of a shepherd to the flock of Christ, both clergy and laity; to "be so merciful that he be not too remiss, and so minister discipline that he forget not mercy"; and while

armed with authority "to correct and punish such as be unquiet, disobedient, and criminous" within his diocese, "to maintain and set forward, as much as shall lie in him, quietness, love, and peace among all men."

The appointment of a single Ecclesiastical Judge for the determination of questions concerning Public Worship may be further hailed as a first step of no inconsiderable importance in the long-needed reform of our Ecclesiastical Courts in general.

Our present Articles of Religion and Book of Common Prayer have kept together for a long time in one Church body a large number of persons, earnest in religious faith and practice, who differ greatly from one another in their views on many points of detail. It would be fatal to the happiness and welfare of our country to break up this bond of union. In matters of religion it is not possible for thoughtful men to arrive at precisely the same conclusions upon all things. Independence of thought and judgment is the very thing which gives value to the faith and opinions of earnest thinkers. It would not be possible to maintain a National Church, in a country where such independence of thought and judgment is regarded as the common right and duty of all, without allowing considerable latitude of opinion among its members and ample scope for the exercise of moderation and forbearance.

In administering the ecclesiastical affairs of the large diocese of Worcester, comprising a body of laity and clergy whom long and affectionate intercourse has led me to esteem as of high mental culture and earnest pious feeling, I have thought it a duty paramount above all others never to lose sight of this need of moderation and forbearance in every question that comes before me, so as to preserve as much as possible the sacred principle which, in my judgment, lies at the root of all our social happiness and national prosperity—I mean the national recognition of religion, including the maintenance of a National Church among us.

My brethren of the clergy will bear with me when I say that I think the same principle of moderation and forbearance and regard for the views of persons who differ from themselves in some things, ought to prevail with them, each in his own parish, in discharging the duties of the sacred office with which they are entrusted. The minister of a parish has no right, if I may so speak, to take advantage of his position to press his own peculiar views, whether in matters of ritual or doctrine, exclusively upon his people. He must not indeed fall short of or go beyond what our Church and realm have ordered, but within those limits he must be prepared not to "abuse his power in the Gospel," but be made all things to all men that he may by all means save some.

The National Church.

It is not an unimportant sign of the times that persons are to be found who speak lightly of the disestablishment, as it is called, of the National Church of England; that is, as I understand the term, of setting free the Church, on the one hand, from the control of Parliament, and of relieving the State, on the other hand, from all care about religion. I persuade myself that no one can regard the agitation of such a question without alarm, who is sufficiently well informed of the history of our country in time past, and the present relations of Church and State among us, or of what is going on at the present time in different parts of Europe. You cannot find an instance in any other country since the beginning of the Church of Christ on earth, where Church and State are more happily bound together by innumerable ties. Our fathers in days of old, and more particularly in the dangerous and difficult time of the Reformation, having wisely proved all things in this respect, we have only the comparatively easy task of holding fast that which is good. "*Fortunati nimium, sua si bona norint,*" may be said of all theorists who would break the ties of Church and State asunder, whether Churchmen from a vain conceit of the blessedness of ecclesiastical supremacy, or men void of all religion,

who grieve that the State should be troubled by the quarrels of ecclesiastics.

The establishment, as it is called, of our Church was not enacted at any definite time that can be named. It dates from the very introduction into this country of the knowledge of the Gospel. Religion has been always, as we are proud to think, part and parcel of the common law of England. Read the history of our country in the records of its national acts, or in the lives of men in public and in private who represent it faithfully. Read the series of our Acts of Parliament from the earliest date downwards, (and it is, perhaps, in this series of Acts of Parliament that we find the history of the nation most truly pictured,) and you will find the principle of a national recognition of religion in a National Church running like a thread through the whole life of the nation. You cannot tear out this thread without making our body politic and social bleed at every pore. If you could succeed in the effort, it requires no great foresight to see that the England of the future will be a very different country from the England of the past. I believe that no persons would in the end regret the result more than those among us who sigh for greater liberty of action for the Church set free from State control, or who, dissenting from Churchmen in some particulars of doctrine and discipline, have really at heart the prevalence of our Lord's kingdom in the Gospel.

Study of the Word of God.

When I regard the difficulties and distresses by which our Church appears to be embarrassed, and think of the part which we of the clergy individually should take in overcoming the evil, my thoughts recur irresistibly to what seems to me the one great source of relief and cure, so far as it is permitted by the great Author of our faith that the evil of dissensions should be cured,—I mean the devout, patient, candid, simple study of the Word of God in Scripture.

I call to mind my own profession and promise at the most solemn moment of my life, upon which I look back from time to time with feelings of overpowering interest. I professed myself persuaded, when the holy office of a bishop was committed to me, that the Holy Scriptures contain sufficiently all doctrine required of necessity for eternal salvation through faith in Jesus Christ; and I promised by God's grace, *out of the same Holy Scriptures* to instruct the people committed to my charge, and to teach or maintain nothing as required of necessity to eternal salvation but that which *I shall be persuaded* may be concluded and proved by the same.

I promised further by the help of God to faithfully exercise myself in the same Holy Scriptures, and call upon God by prayer for the true under-

standing of the same, so as I may be able by them to teach and exhort with wholesome doctrine, and to withstand and convince the gainsayers.

My reverend brethren will permit me to remind them that they, one and all, as many as have been admitted into the holy order of priests, have professed the same persuasion, and have made the same promise. They have, one and all, undertaken to endeavour themselves, the Lord being their helper, to be diligent in prayers and in reading the Holy Scriptures, and in such studies as help to the knowledge of the same, laying aside the study of the world and the flesh.

The experience of my brethren will have told them that no one can have followed the course thus pointed out, of "daily reading and weighing of the Scriptures," drawing all his cares and studies that way, and continually praying to God the Father, by the mediation of our Saviour Jesus Christ, for the heavenly assistance of the Holy Ghost, without finding that he has been thereby saved from many troubles, that he has waxed riper and stronger in his ministry, that he has learnt to distinguish in matters of religion what is Divine from what is human, that he has ceased to attach importance to the ecclesiastical things, which are of men, in comparison with what the Scriptures tell him is undoubtedly of God.

When our minds have been vexed by dwelling on matters of controversy in Divine things, where

wisdom is darkened by many words, who has not felt the relief of going back to the source of all truth in the Bible, and there reading with a single eye the words of inspiration, seeking to discover nothing in them but the meaning of their Divine Author, found that meaning clear, so that the wayfaring man, though a fool, need not err therein?

The records of antiquity in our creeds are dear to us. The vestiges of primitive practice in matters of ritual, so far as they can be found in sources worthy of credit, are full of interest and value. But "Holy Scripture containeth *all things* necessary to salvation," and the creeds themselves are to be received and believed only "because they may be proved by most certain warrants of Holy Scripture."

The lay members of our Church have long enjoyed what the most devout among them justly regard as a privilege of inestimable value, the free use of Holy Writ. They will never consent to give up this privilege. They will continue to read the Bible and to use it, with such aid as the clergy give them and for which they will be abundantly grateful, as the foundation upon which to build their faith and from which to draw rules for the government of their daily life and practice.

You, my reverend brethren, in your several parishes may lead your people freely, if you give them reason to think that your teaching and ritual are, as our Church directs, in accordance with the

Word of God. You may lead them by precept and example in the way of holy living, into deep reverence for the things of God, into self-denying practical exhibitions of Christian love. But you would never succeed, if you were disposed to make the effort, in leading the intelligent piety and common sense of English Protestants to be satisfied with a ritual which they are persuaded is out of harmony with the spiritual lessons of our Lord in Holy Writ, or to believe doctrines which our Reformers rejected, and which our Church has not hesitated to condemn in one important particular as "blasphemous fables and dangerous deceits."

It is distressing to know that the attention of Churchmen, both ministers and people, has been long fixed, far more than it ought to have been, on things of comparatively small importance in religious matters. Bitterness and wrath and anger and clamour and evil speaking have prevailed among us with regard to such things, where we ought to have seen nothing but the fruits of the Spirit in love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance. The things which are of earth have occupied us all, clergy and laity alike, more than the things which are of heaven. We have spent too much time and thought upon things ecclesiastical, which are of men, to the neglect of the things of God, which long and patient study would have persuaded us may be concluded and proved by the Scripture.

When you and I, my reverend brethren, shall have come to the end of our day of labour (and there are many among my hearers who, like myself, cannot be far from it), the silver cord being almost loosed, and the golden bowl near its breaking, how deep will be our regret if, upon the review of what we have done, we shall have reason to think that we have preached ourselves more than the Lord Jesus; that we have claimed for the minister what belongs to the Master only; that we have led our people away from the Rock of Ages to trust in the "dangerous deceits" of superstition, away from the thing signified in the Sacraments to the sign, away from the fountain of living waters in the Gospel to the broken cisterns of man's devising, which can hold no water; that we have not used our ministry exclusively and fully for the high and holy purpose for which it was entrusted to us, to raise our people into higher life, to prepare the way of the Lord by making the crooked straight and the rough ways smooth, to train the young, and to guide the old in the paths that shall lead them to everlasting life! "It is one stratagem of the arch-enemy of mankind," writes Bishop Sanderson "(and when we know his wiles we may be better able to defeat him) by busying men of great and useful parts in bye matters of lesser consequence, to divert them from following that *unum necessarium* which should be the main in all our endeavours, the beating down of sin, the planting

of faith, and the reformation of manners. Controversies, I confess, are necessary, the tongues necessary, histories necessary, philosophy and the arts necessary, other knowledge of all sorts necessary in the Church; for truth must be maintained, Scripture phrase opened, heresy confuted, the mouths of adversaries stopped, schisms and novelties suppressed. But, when all is done, *positive and practic Divinity* is it must bring us to heaven; that is it must poise our judgments, settle our conscience, direct our lives, mortify our corruptions, increase our graces, strengthen our comforts, save our souls."

A CHARGE

DELIVERED TO

THE CLERGY AND CHURCHWARDENS OF THE DIOCESE OF WORCESTER

At his Visitation in June, 1877

BY

HENRY, LORD BISHOP OF WORCESTER

RIVINGTONS
WATERLOO PLACE, LONDON
Oxford and Cambridge
MDCCCLXXVII

My Reverend Brethren of the Clergy and my Brethren of the Laity,—

The occasion of meeting the clergy and churchwardens of his diocese in visitation in the seventeenth year of his consecration cannot fail to suggest serious thoughts to a bishop.

How have I spent the sixteen years, during which I have been permitted to work in my heavenly Master's service? How have I behaved myself in the Church of God? How have I executed the office, whereunto I have been called? How far have I fulfilled the promises made at my admission to that office? Have I instructed the people committed to my charge, as opportunity enabled me, out of the Holy Scriptures? Have I faithfully exercised myself in the same Holy Scriptures, and called upon God by prayer for the true understanding of the same? Have I been ready, with all faithful diligence, to banish and drive away all erroneous and strange doctrine, contrary to God's word? Have I shown myself in all things an example of good works unto others, denying all ungodliness and worldly lusts, and living soberly, righteously, and godly in this pre-

sent world? Have I maintained and set forward, as much as lay in me, quietness, love, and peace among all men? Have I been faithful in ordaining? Have I shown myself gentle, and been merciful for Christ's sake to poor and needy people, and to all strangers destitute of help? Have I fed the flock of Christ committed to my care with a faithful and true heart, and ruled them prudently with all my power?

I do not doubt that similar questions occur to you, my brethren of the clergy, as you attend the visitations of the Bishop from time to time, when our thoughts are carried back to the past upon each occasion in review of what has been done by us since our last meeting.

May our heavenly Father give us grace to profit by such reflections! May He give us also a larger measure of strength hereafter to perform what at our ordination we professed a good will to do! May He accomplish in us the good work which we trust that He then began, that we may be found "perfect and irreprehensible at the latter day!"

I have often regretted that the office of ordering priests and deacons in our Church cannot lawfully be used on any other day than a Sunday or holy day, when the clergy for the most part are unable to attend the service, because they are occupied by duties in their own cures. I am accustomed to welcome every time of Ordination

as a most wholesome opportunity for calling to mind the duties of ministers in our Lord's Church, and for fixing our thoughts upon the solemn promises, with which it is ordered that the office and work should be undertaken. I am persuaded that the clergy also would welcome the services of Ordination in the same spirit and attend them gladly, if the times could be so arranged as not to interfere with their own parochial duties.

In looking back upon the time passed since my last Visitation no thought presents itself more readily to my mind, as always upon former occasions of the same kind, than that of gratitude for the kindness and goodwill with which my ministrations in the ordinary work of a bishop have been welcomed. I have no greater joy than to be of use in giving counsel, whether to the clergy or the laity, in the several parishes of the diocese; to help in solving doubts or removing difficulties in cases where the experience of many years, and the advantage of seeing things habitually from a point of view which reaches beyond the limits of a single parish, may enable a bishop of long standing in office to find his way to right conclusions. I am grateful at the recollection of many instances in which such offers of service have been well received. I count them among the greatest comforts with which the mercy of our heavenly Father has blessed my life and made it happy.

Cathedral Services.

It was provided by an Order of the Queen in Council, May 23, 1844, that in every cathedral church, in which any plan for the preaching of the honorary canons therein shall be agreed upon by the dean and chapter, with the consent of the visitor, every honorary canon appointed in the same church shall conform to such plan, provided that he shall not be required so to preach more than once in any year.

Since the happy event of the completion of the restoration of our cathedral the dean and chapter have proceeded to put in force this order; and I have had great satisfaction in giving my consent to plans proposed by them for the preaching of the honorary canons at the services, which have been held with good effect on every Sunday evening throughout the year in the cathedral. While persons living in the city of Worcester and its neighbourhood have thus the advantage of hearing preachers from all parts of the diocese, it may be hoped that the tie which connects the clergy in general with our cathedral will be strengthened, and the idea which represents it as the mother church of the diocese be more fully realised.

Ordinations.

The number of persons admitted into holy orders as deacons in the diocese, during the last three

years, was one hundred and twenty-one, of whom ninety-two were graduates, twenty-one had obtained certificates from theological colleges, and eight were literates.

The corresponding numbers in the three years preceding the last Visitation were: ninety-six graduates, twenty from theological colleges, and six literates.

I have also admitted into priest's orders during the last three years nine persons who had been ordained deacons in other dioceses.

Confirmations.

The number of persons confirmed during the last three years was 18,811; a considerable increase upon the number (17,510) confirmed in the three years preceding the last Visitation.

Elementary Education.

I need not remind my hearers that the subject of elementary education has occupied a large share of public attention, as its great importance merits, since our last meeting.

I ventured in the year 1874 to express the opinion that the prospects of good elementary education for our children had never been more cheerful than they were at that time. If that opinion was well founded, I think we may say

that the prospects are still more full of hope at present.

The Elementary Education Act, 1876, has done much to encourage us. Having been prepared by Her Majesty's Government with careful attention to the working and results of the Act of 1870, and amended after long and exhaustive discussion in Parliament, it has made many steps in advance towards the right solution of many questions in the great problem of national education, some of which are to a great extent new to our experience.

I need not recount to you, who are all more or less acquainted with them, the provisions of the Act in detail. It may suffice to remind you of the provisions for the payment of school fees by the guardians of the poor in every parish for the children of indigent parents, who are not paupers; of the power given to school attendance committees to enforce attendance at school; of the provisions made for indirect compulsion by forbidding the employment of children in any sort of work under certain ages, and except on certain conditions; of the inducements offered for regular attendance by the promise of free education; and finally, of the more liberal scale of grants offered to schools supported by voluntary contributions.

These provisions of the recent Act have made the prospects of good elementary education hopeful, and have strengthened the hands of those who

wish to combine efficient instruction in secular learning with the inculcation of sound principles of religion, without which they consider all teaching of the young to be of little value.

There is reason to believe that in most of the parishes of the diocese, excluding those where long-continued neglect of providing the means of teaching has made the difficulty insuperable, it will now be found possible to provide all that is needed for the elementary education of the young by voluntary efforts. Great and sustained exertion will, no doubt, be required in all cases to maintain efficiency of teaching; and, in cases of increasing population, to provide for increasing wants; but there is reason to hope that in most cases such exertion will be made cheerfully, and the trouble and cost of school boards will be avoided.

There never can be wanting, however, places, chiefly in towns, where, though voluntary efforts are not wanting, school boards are unavoidable. In such places some rivalry must of necessity arise between schools maintained by rates, and those which are supported by voluntary contributions. Greater effort in the cause of education, also, will be required in such places than elsewhere, because those who support voluntary schools will be compelled to pay school rates also. In many instances we may hope that such greater effort will be made without grudging, and successfully to keep up voluntary schools; though in some cases it must

be expected that in course of time the effort will fail, and that the teaching of our children must be done altogether in rate-supported schools.

A question of great interest and importance arises upon this state of things. What relation should Church people, who value the teaching of religion as the most essential part of elementary education, try to form for themselves with rate-supported schools? It is beyond doubt, as I have said, that the elementary teaching of all the children of the poor in some parishes, and of large numbers of children in other parishes, must be conducted in rate-supported schools. It is certain also, that, while school boards are forbidden to allow the use in their schools of any religious catechism or formulary which is distinctive of any particular domination, the spirit of the Acts of Parliament, under which they exercise their powers, implies or assumes that some religious teaching is to be provided in all schools. Ought not we, who have at heart the teaching of religion, to give all the help we can to those school boards who wish to encourage such teaching, and try to give effect to their efforts in that direction by the same means which we have found useful in schools supported by voluntary contributions?

The diocese of Worcester has found reason to value the system of inspection of schools by officers appointed for the purpose, as a most efficient instrument for the encouragement of religious teaching;

such system including periodical examination of pupil teachers and scholars, with the adjuncts of prizes and certificates of proficiency.

I count it a happy thing that from the beginning of this system of inspection in the diocese our boards of education for the two archdeaconries have recognised the duty of not denying the benefit of inspection to any public elementary school within their limits. Our diocesan inspectors are ready, at the request of any school board, to examine its schools in religious knowledge. The pupil teachers in board schools, and the children taught in them, are admitted to our prize-scheme examinations instituted for the encouragement of religious learning.

It is satisfactory to learn, from the Report issued in 1876 by the Church Inspector of Training Colleges, that "in an increasing number of cases, school boards are anxiously making provision for the religious teaching of their children and pupil teachers. Overtures are being made to the courtesy of diocesan inspectors, or to any other available agency for the purpose." "Let us do all we possibly can," he adds, "to meet such overtures. We none of us like board schools as well as we like voluntary schools; but they are a necessity wherever the voluntary system fails. Let us then be wise in our generation, and loyally make the very best of them."

I cannot leave the subject of elementary educa-

tion without taking the opportunity to express my regret that the diocese of Worcester should present an instance, conspicuous above others, of a school board refusing to recognise in its schools any kind whatever of religious observances or religious teaching. The School Board of Birmingham, taking advantage of the omission from the Elementary Education Acts of any provision for religious observances or religious teaching, and disregarding, as it appears to me, the spirit of the Acts in this particular, has professed its determination to separate religious instruction altogether from secular instruction, and to apply the teaching in its schools to secular subjects only.

Not to mention the difficulty (may I not say the impossibility) of giving any instruction whatever, worthy of the name, in many necessary subjects without some recognition of the Great Being, "whose never failing Providence ordereth all things both in heaven and earth," I cannot regard with other than painful feelings the practice of bringing together large numbers of children for the education which is to fit them for the duties and responsibilities of life without taking advantage of the opportunity to encourage at least some habits of piety by elementary lessons of religion and the use of simple forms of prayer.

I am inclined to think that in the teaching of all our elementary schools we are apt to aim at too high results; and the remark applies as well

to the religious as to the secular teaching of our children. The proper work and office of elementary education are to be found, not so much in storing the mind with facts, or imparting the knowledge of theories which admit of question, as in the process of instilling principles, of developing the natural powers, of laying a good foundation upon which the future acquisition of knowledge may be made to rest.

Let us hope that at no distant day the School Board of Birmingham will take a view of the question of religious teaching more in accordance with the feeling which is almost universal in the country, and not deny to the children taught in its schools the inestimable advantage of turning their attendance there to profit, by learning such elementary religious lessons and acquiring such habits of piety as may lead them in after life to act upon those principles of religion, which are "the only sure stay of a well-ordered commonwealth."

Incumbents' Resignation Act.

Since the passing of the Incumbents' Resignation Act, 1871, fourteen incumbents in the diocese have taken advantage of its provisions.

Great relief has thus been given to clergymen whose advanced age or infirmities made them no longer able to bear without pain the responsibilities of office; and the several parishes in which

they ministered have derived corresponding advantage from the succession of new incumbents.

It is obvious, however, that the provisions of the Act cannot be applied to benefices of small annual value, of which, alas! the diocese still presents many instances, where the whole revenue is miserably inadequate for the support of one incumbent. It is worthy of consideration whether the need of retiring pensions in such cases might not be met by some diocesan fund established for the purpose, or by extending the objects of the societies formed in the two Archdeaconries for the relief of widows and orphans of clergymen, and of such clergymen as are disabled by age, sickness, or infirmity.

Ecclesiastical Dilapidations.

Upon the occasion of my last Visitation I ventured to say that the Ecclesiastical Dilapidations Act, 1871, had laid the foundation of permanent and great good.

My experience in the last three years has fully confirmed this opinion; and the personal attention which I have given to the working of the Act in every case has satisfied me that its provisions, in the main, deserve great commendation.

From the commencement of operations under the Act to the end of the year 1876 I issued one hundred and four final orders for benefices inspected upon vacancies.

In six of these cases only it was found necessary to alter the amounts of the estimates made by the surveyors; in four of these the estimates were increased, and in the remaining two they were diminished; and in every case it was found practicable to obtain a result satisfactory to both parties without calling in a second surveyor. It is worthy of mention, also, that in the case where the estimate of dilapidations was larger in amount than any other with which I have had to deal the representatives of the deceased incumbent thought fit to tell me that, after testing the report and estimate of the diocesan surveyor with care, and with the assistance of a builder and surveyor employed by themselves, they were satisfied that nothing had been excluded, or inequitably included, and that they considered the cost of the necessary repairs to be estimated at a proper amount.

It will be remembered that in the last session of Parliament a Select Committee of the House of Commons, appointed "to inquire into the operation of the Ecclesiastical Dilapidations Act," reported their opinion that it had failed in many respects to accomplish the object for which it was enacted, and that some legislative alteration is needed to remove the well-grounded complaints of a large body of the clergy.

The Committee further recommended that the whole question of dilapidations should be met by

a system of annual contributions from each benefice, proportioned to the state of repair and value of the buildings by a periodical survey, which may be conducted by a surveyor at a salary; and that the management of the whole should be remitted to the Board of Governors of Queen Anne's Bounty.

Whatever may be the defects of the system established by the present Act, I think it is not difficult to see that the system proposed by the Committee would be far worse, and that the alterations recommended would be inefficient and injurious.

To my mind, the idea of a Board of Commissioners in London undertaking to keep in repair all the buildings upon all the benefices in England and Wales, and to regulate the contributions of the several incumbents year by year, so that no one should pay more than is needed for the maintenance of his own particular buildings, seems to exceed the wildest flights of fancy.

No principle appears to me more sound than that, when the tenant of any ecclesiastical buildings is put in possession of them in a state of good repair at the beginning of his incumbency, he should be required to deliver them up to his successor in the same condition. The provisions of the Ecclesiastical Dilapidations Act, 1871, are based upon this principle. It is required that upon the occasion of every new incumbency all the buildings should be put in good repair. The

sum of money needed for the purpose is a debt due to the new incumbent from his predecessor. It is plain that the prospect of being able to obtain payment of this debt should be regarded as a necessary element of consideration in determining the question of undertaking the cure. The new incumbent takes the benefice with his eyes open to the responsibility of putting the buildings at once into good repair; and he has no one but himself to blame afterwards, if, at the end of his incumbency, he finds himself liable for a large amount of dilapidations.

It may be useful to consider in one or two points of comparison the difference between the system, or rather want of system, which prevailed before 1871, and that which has been established by the present Act.

Before 1871 there was no sufficient security that the buildings of a benefice should be protected from falling gradually into ruin. Instances of such neglect have been, in fact, of no infrequent occurrence. The present Act makes it imperative that, at least upon the occasion of every change of incumbency, all the buildings should be put in good repair.

Before 1871 there was no security that the persons employed to assess dilapidations in any case were sufficiently acquainted with the law of the subject, or sufficiently conversant with the details of the work of building. The Act of 1871

commits the office of surveyor to one or more persons in every diocese, chosen by representatives of the clergy with special reference to the work entrusted to them, and with a fixed scale of rates of payment for their services. The constant employment of these surveyors in the work of assessing dilapidations cannot fail to make them well acquainted with the law which governs dilapidations, and to give them experience in estimating the cost of the work that they may order.

Before 1871, again, there was no sufficient security that the money paid for dilapidations by the representatives of the outgoing incumbent was spent in doing the substantial work, for which the payment was required. The present law provides that the money should be paid to the Governors of Queen Anne's Bounty, and be retained by them until they shall be certified that the work ordered has been done to the satisfaction of the surveyor by whom the necessary repairs were specified.

Before 1871, also, it may be added, the costs of litigation in the matter of dilapidations were often very large, while under the present law, by prudent management and care, cases of dispute may, in general, be settled satisfactorily at little or no expense.

It is important to bear in mind that the law which governs the amount of dilapidations has not been altered by anything contained in the

recent Act. Surveyors acquainted with their business have little difficulty about it. The courts of common law have long since laid down, in certain well-known cases, the general principles by which the amount of dilapidations should be settled. It does not seem practicable or prudent to go beyond such principles in further defining particulars by positive enactment, or to attempt to construct a catalogue of details which may suffice for all cases; though it may perhaps be worth consideration, if the subject should again occupy the attention of the Legislature, whether some standing commission or tribunal might be established, open to appeal from all parts of the country, and armed with authority to settle summarily questions of fact or law which might be brought before it.

Cases of apparent, or perhaps real, hardship must be expected to arise in changing from a state of things, in which much was uncertain, to a system of strict law. An incumbent, for example, may have taken possession of his benefice without any account of dilapidations, and without the expectation of being obliged to put his buildings into good repair, and now find himself at last compelled to do so. In many such cases the hardship might be removed or mitigated by a judicious use of the power given to the Governors of Queen Anne's Bounty, to grant loans, to be repaid in a definite term of years.

The Act of 1871 has, no doubt, placed great power in the hands of the bishop, whether wisely or not it is not for me to judge. I can only say for myself, that in the exercise of such power I have never failed to bear in mind the responsibility attached to it, nor to weigh well the circumstances of every case, with regard to that responsibility, before the issue of the final order. If the Legislature should think fit to entrust this power to other hands, it will not be the part of the bishop to complain of the relief thus given him.

Considering the stringency of the present law, a stringency of which I must profess my belief that it is no more than what is just, and which I am persuaded that the Legislature will not consent to relax, my brethren of the clergy will allow me to remind them of the prudence of attending to all repairs in time. Do not put off till to-morrow what ought to be done to-day. Try to prevent the need of a large outlay in repairs hereafter by timely attention to small defects at present.

Ecclesiastical Legislation.

Besides the Elementary Education Act, 1876, several measures affecting the Church have received the force of law since our last meeting.

In 1874, a useful Act was passed by Parliament to facilitate the rearrangement of archdeaconries and rural deaneries in any diocese.

In the same year was passed the Public Worship Regulation Act, of which, alas! we have heard much during the last two years. That some provision was needed for the objects which that Act was intended to accomplish, cannot, I think, be doubted by anyone who duly considers the constitution and circumstances of the Church of England, and the necessity of securing obedience to the rules, by which the law of the realm has ordered that public worship in our churches should be governed.

In the year 1875, the provisions of the Bishops Resignation Act, 1869, which was then expiring, were made perpetual.

A further step was taken also by the Ecclesiastical Fees Act, 1875, to settle the long pending questions respecting fees payable to the officers of ecclesiastical courts, and to persons employed by bishops in the transaction of official business. It is much to be desired that these vexatious questions should be promptly and finally settled upon the only satisfactory and intelligible principles, that all useless form of procedure should be abolished, that necessary forms should be simplified, that no more officers should be employed than are wanted for the work required to be done, and that no higher remuneration should be given to them than is sufficient to secure the services of well-instructed, able men, and to pay them liberally for what they do.

I should welcome gladly the enactment of a provision which was proposed at first in the Ecclesiastical Offices and Fees Bill, 1876, but afterwards withdrawn by the promoters of the Bill, for the formal admission to office of a churchwarden at the meeting of the vestry where he is appointed, or, in case of his absence, by the archdeacon of the archdeaconry, or rural dean of the rural deanery, in which the parish is situated.

A provision of this nature would be of great practical convenience to the several parishes of the diocese, and to the gentlemen who are good enough to undertake the office of churchwarden.

In the year 1875, and again in 1876, Acts of Parliament were passed for establishing new bishoprics, one of St. Alban's, and another of Truro.

It is encouraging to learn that large sums of money have been contributed for the foundation of these bishoprics by persons who wish to give greater efficiency to the ministrations of the Church of England. A Bill, brought in by Her Majesty's Government, is now also under the consideration of Parliament for the foundation of four other new sees in the most populous parts of England. If this Bill should receive the sanction of the Legislature, there is reason to believe that funds may be found without any considerable delay to give effect to its provisions.

I am not aware that any strong wish has been

expressed in the diocese of Worcester for a re-arrangement of the limits by which the diocese is bounded. In reply to an invitation, with which I was honoured, to express my opinion upon the subject, I ventured to suggest for consideration, if any change were contemplated, the plan of restoring the boundaries of the diocese, as they were before the rearrangement made in the year 1837; with the addition, however, of those parishes in the county of Worcester which now form part of the diocese of Hereford.

It appears to me, that if the diocese of Lichfield were relieved, as is proposed in the Bill now before Parliament, by the transfer of the county of Derby to the new see of Southwell, and further relieved also by the transfer to the diocese of Hereford of those parts of the county of Salop which now form part of the diocese of Lichfield, it might be desirable to revive the see of Lichfield and Coventry, as before 1837, the archdeaconry of Coventry being included in it.

The severance of the archdeaconry of Coventry from the diocese of Worcester, if it were done during my tenure of the see, would, indeed, be a great and real grief to me, for it would break my official connection with a large number of persons, both clergy and laity, whom the experience of many years has taught me to regard with feelings of strong affection, and with whom my intercourse has been to me a source of unmixed pleasure.

Personal feelings, however, must not be allowed to prevail against any proposal for increased efficiency in Church work; and I comfort myself by the thought that it is more than probable that the change, if approved by those who have the power to make it, will not take effect while I am permitted still to labour in my heavenly Master's service.

I must add, also, what I have often taken occasion to say, that in my opinion a much more pressing want of our Church than the creation of new sees is to be found in the better endowment of benefices of small income, both in town and country. The patrons of such benefices are often sorely tried in finding suitable persons able and willing to undertake the cures; and the hardships endured by the clergy in them, and endured for the most part with fortitude worthy of all admiration, are frequently the cause of great distress to those who have the opportunity of becoming acquainted with them.

The Appellate Jurisdiction Act, 1876, has at length settled the constitution of the Court of Final Appeal in ecclesiastical cases.

Rules made by the Queen in Council, in pursuance of the provisions of that Act, have provided that while the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, and the Bishop of London, sitting in rotation each for one year, shall be *ex officio* assessors of the Judicial Committee of Privy Council on the hearing of ecclesiastical cases, the other bishops shall

attend also as assessors, sitting in rotation, four together, for one year. No ecclesiastical case is to be heard by the Judicial Committee unless three at least of the five ecclesiastical assessors are present at the hearing.

I must beg the attention of my hearers once more, as on former occasions, to the circumstance (for it cannot be too often or too well considered), that the province of the Judicial Committee in hearing ecclesiastical cases is not to settle matters of doctrine, or rules for the conduct of public worship, or to determine what ought to be the doctrine of our Church, or our rule of public worship in any particular; but simply to declare, upon the true construction of her formularies, what has been already established by the law of the realm to be the doctrine or rule of public worship of the Church of England.

Ecclesiastical Judgments.

The present year will be remarkable for what we may hope to be the final settlement of the two vexed questions of the vestments to be worn by the clergy in the administration of the Lord's Supper, and the position to be taken by the minister in consecrating the elements of bread and wine.

It has long been felt by many, who take different views of these questions among themselves, that

the decision given by the Judicial Committee of Privy Council in the case of Hibbert *v.* Purchas could not be considered satisfactory or final, inasmuch as the arguments of counsel were heard on the side of the promoters of the suit only.

We have now had the advantage of a decision given after the full hearing of counsel on both sides by a court consisting of ten judges, aided by the advice of the Archbishop of Canterbury, and four other episcopal assessors. No more competent body of persons could be found to deal with the many intricate matters of fact and law which the solution of the questions involves, so as to make clear what has been prescribed or is allowed to the ministers of the Church of England.

The Court admitted the force of the objection that in the case of Hibbert *v.* Purchas the Judicial Committee had not the advantage of an argument by the defendant's counsel on the points in question. They allowed, further, that in proceedings which may come to assume a penal form a tribunal, even of the last resort, ought to be slow to exclude any fresh light which may be brought to bear upon the subject. They were thus led to consider themselves at liberty to examine the reasons upon which former decisions of the Judicial Committee were arrived at; and if they should find themselves forced to dissent from those reasons, to decide upon their own view of the law.

After an argument, stated by the Court at great length, and apparently embracing all the

considerations proper to be taken into account in a case of great difficulty—an argument which I do not hesitate to describe as one of the most able, clear, and convincing that I have ever studied upon any subject—the Judicial Committee decided that it is not lawful for the officiating minister in a parish church to wear the vestments known as an alb and a chasuble during the service of the Holy Communion.

They decided, further, with regard to the position of the minister while consecrating the elements of bread and wine, reversing in this respect the decision of the Committee in the case of Hibbert *v.* Purchas, that no offence is committed by the minister standing at the middle of the west side of the Communion table, provided he so place himself that the people may see him break the bread and take the cup into his hand.

The minister is to order the elements "standing before the table;" words which, say the Committee, would be fully satisfied by his standing on the north side and looking towards the south; but which also, as the tables are now usually, and in their opinion lawfully, placed, authorise him to do these acts standing on the west side and looking towards the east. After this the minister must stand so that he may, *in good faith*, enable the communicants present, or the bulk of them, being properly placed, to see, if they wish it, the breaking of the bread and the performance of the other manual acts mentioned. He must not interpose his

body so as intentionally to defeat the object of the rubric and prevent this result.

I hope, as I have said, that the decision now given will set at rest these questions among us for ever. When I think of the high hopes for time and for eternity which well-instructed Christians cherish, of the never-ceasing warfare which the ministers of our Lord in His Church are bound to wage against the powers of selfishness and sin in themselves and in the people over whom they are put in charge, and of the constant need of thought and effort for the successful prosecution of this warfare, so that when we have done all that we can in this respect we must confess ourselves to be unprofitable servants, I cannot help feeling humiliated and distressed that these miserable questions of ritual should have been allowed to occupy so much time and thought, and draw away the attention of many from the pursuit of the one thing needful.

I should have been glad to be altogether silent upon a subject which has excited much angry feeling, if I did not feel that so much misapprehension prevails respecting it, and that the questions which arise upon it and the issues involved in the right solution of those questions are of so much vital importance to the religious and social and political welfare of our people, that it seems imperative upon a bishop, on an occasion like the present, not to refrain from expressing the conclu-

sions to which full consideration may have guided him respecting it. I refer to the case in the diocese of Rochester, where the incumbent of a benefice has been encouraged to refuse compliance with an order of the Court of Arches inhibiting him from the performance of official duty in consequence of his persistence in the use of certain observances of ritual which have been declared to be illegal.

I feel that I should be justly liable to the charge of neglect of duty, if I did not express my great regret and grief at an act, which seems to me to deserve grave censure, of open defiance of the High Courts of Justice, to which the law of the realm has entrusted the interpretation of our rubrics for the regulation of public worship, and the duty of maintaining discipline and order. "Whosoever," says our thirty-fourth Article of Religion, "through his private judgment, willingly and purposely, doth openly break the traditions and ceremonies of the Church, which be not repugnant to the Word of God, and be ordained and approved by common authority, ought to be rebuked openly, (that others may fear to do the like,) as he that offendeth against the common order of the Church, and hurteth the authority of the magistrate, and woundeth the consciences of the weak brethren."

Nothing, in my opinion, can justify acts of open defiance to lawful authority on the part of

ministers of the Church, except a command to do things which are plainly inconsistent with, or to abstain from doing things which are plainly required by, allegiance to our Lord in His kingdom of heaven, which is not of this world, and in which it is our task of effort to "lay hold on eternal life."

The law of the realm has imposed conditions to be observed by the ministers of the Church of England in their use of our churches, and in their enjoyment of the endowments belonging to them. The ministers themselves must have received episcopal ordination; public worship is to be conducted in our churches according to the order prescribed in our Book of Common Prayer; the teaching of our ministers is not to be contrary to the Articles of Religion, which have been sanctioned by the Legislature, for the avoiding of diversities of opinion, and for the establishing of consent touching true religion.

If anyone, seeking the office of minister in the Church of England, is of opinion that he cannot conscientiously comply with these conditions; or if, having been admitted to the office of minister, and having thereby expressly undertaken to comply with them, he finds, on experience afterwards, that he cannot honestly continue such compliance, I do not see what course is open to him other than to cease from seeking or to retire from office.

The laws of our country do not prevent anyone

who thinks he has a vocation for the purpose, from teaching other doctrines, or conducting public worship according to any other form, provided that no offence is thereby committed against morality or good order; but teaching which is contrary to our Articles of Religion, and forms of public worship which are inconsistent with the true meaning of what is prescribed in our Book of Common Prayer, must not be supported by the endowments, or be allowed in the buildings, which the law of the realm has secured for the use of the Church of England.

It is obvious that the governing power of the country cannot permit the law, when it has been once clearly ascertained, to be broken with impunity. If existing means are not sufficient, the Legislature will provide others for the enforcement of obedience. Every member of our community may use all lawful and honourable means for getting our laws amended, and the constitution of our courts of justice altered; but so long as they remain, it cannot be left to the choice of any individual or society of persons holding office to determine whether or not they will comply with what is ordered.

I am aware that the opinions which I thus venture to express respecting acts of non-compliance with the law in things ecclesiastical do not find favour or acceptance with all the members of our Church; and among the persons who reject such

opinions, may be some whom I am now addressing, and to whom, notwithstanding differences of opinion, I am bound by ties of affectionate regard and honour. Such persons think that resistance to the decisions of our courts of justice and to the enactments of statute law is a duty, because they consider that the courts, to which the law of the realm has committed the interpretation of our formularies and the decision of doubtful questions, are not constituted as such courts ought to be; and that the Legislature does not sufficiently regard the voice of the clergy in making the laws by which our Church is governed.

I can only say for myself that such persons take a very different view from that to which I have been accustomed of the constitution of the Church of England, and of its relation to the supreme power by which the realm is governed.

The Church, of which they have formed to themselves an idea, and whose rights they are anxious to uphold, is not the body, to the office of ministering in which I professed at my ordination that I thought myself truly called "according to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ and the due order of this realm."

Much of the misapprehension which prevails upon the subject seems to me to arise from the notion of a supposed "compact between Church and State," as between two independent bodies competent to make terms of treaty with one

another, by virtue of which the ministers and members of the Church, as such, are free from the ordinary liabilities of subjects to the supreme governing power. Ingenious theories of such a compact have been invented by clever writers, who undertake to describe its nature and conditions; of which, however, it may be sufficient to say that they have no foundation of fact whatever to rest upon.

Whatever may have been the case in times before the sixteenth century, when the Church of England acknowledged allegiance to a foreign power, as its spiritual head, who claimed the right of treating with the temporal head of the State on behalf of its subjects, and demanding for them exemption from the exercise of temporal jurisdiction, it cannot be seriously contended that any foundation for the supposed compact has existed since the time[1] when it was solemnly declared and enacted, that "the sovereign is the only supreme governor of this realm, as well in all spiritual or ecclesiastical things or causes as temporal;" and that "no foreign prince, power, state, or potentate hath, or ought to have, any jurisdiction, power, superiority, pre-eminence, or authority, ecclesiastical or spiritual, within this realm."

Ever since the time when this memorable declaration was enacted the supremacy of the Crown and Legislature of the realm over all persons and

[1] 1 Elizabeth.

things, ecclesiastical or civil, has been without question. The voice of the governing power in Parliament has prescribed the conditions under which our churches are to be used, and the quiet enjoyment of their endowments to be permitted to our clergy.

The student of history, moreover, who looks back to the times before the Reformation, will not fail to find that there never was at any time real foundation for the theory of a compact between the Church of England and the State, by virtue of which the ministers and members of the Church were free from the ordinary authority of the sovereign governing power.

Before the conquest of England by the Normans it is well known that there was no distinction in point of jurisdiction between things ecclesiastical and things temporal. All questions, ecclesiastical or civil, were determined in courts, where ecclesiastical and temporal judges sat together to administer justice. The separation of ecclesiastical from temporal jurisdiction was first made by King William the Conqueror, who assigned to the respective courts, each deriving its authority from himself, their proper sphere of action.

History records that in subsequent times ecclesiastical jurisdiction, independent of the sovereign governing power of the realm, was occasionally usurped by the Church and Court of Rome with more or less success; as when, in the time of the

Conqueror himself, foreign legates or commissioners were sent to England to hear and determine ecclesiastical causes; or, as in the time of King Henry I., when the Popes claimed the donation and investiture of bishopries and other benefices; or, as in the time of King Stephen, when they insisted upon the right of appeal from English courts of justice to the tribunals of the Court of Rome; or, as in the time of King Henry II., when they claimed the entire exemption of the clergy from the cognisance of the temporal power; or, lastly, as in the reign of King John, when they filled up the measure of usurpation by pretending to take the crown off the king's head, and compel him to accept his kingdom as a gift from the Court of Rome.

None of these measures of usurpation, however, in whatever degree successful for the moment, were permitted without remonstrance. The ancient rights of sovereignty in the realm were upheld notwithstanding. They were formally asserted and confirmed by Parliament, in the reigns of King Edward III. and King Richard II. The Statutes of Provisors then enacted were framed as well to abolish the wrongful usurpations of a foreign power, as to confine the ecclesiastical courts of the kingdom within their proper province, and to put a stop thenceforth, as it was supposed, for ever to all that might be attempted "in prejudice and disherison of our lord the king and of his crown, and of all the people of his said realm, and to the

wounding and destruction of *the common law of the same realm at all times used.*"

The true theory of the constitution of the Church of England, and of the relations between Church and State, "according to the due order of this realm," was finally stated in words, which have been readily accepted from the time of their being adopted to the present day, in the preamble of the Statute "for the Restraint of Appeals," in the reign of King Henry VIII.

"By divers sundry old authentic histories and chronicles it is manifestly declared and expressed, that this realm of England is an empire, and so hath been accepted in the world, governed by one supreme head and king, having the dignity and royal estate of the imperial crown of the same; unto whom a body politic, compact of all sorts and degrees of people, divided in terms and by names of spirituality and temporality, been bounden and owen to bear, next to God, a natural and humble obedience; he being also institute and furnished by the goodness and sufferance of Almighty God, with plenary, whole, and entire power, pre-eminence, authority, prerogative, and jurisdiction, to render and yield justice and final determination to all manner of folk, resiants or subjects, within this his realm, in all causes, matters, debates, and contentions happening to occur, insurge, or begin, within the limits thereof." [1]

[1] 24 Henry VIII. c. 12.

The same principle is found clearly expressed in the thirty-seventh of our Articles of Religion, where it is said that "the Queen's Majesty hath the chief power in this realm of England, and other her dominions, unto whom the chief government of all estates of this realm, whether they be ecclesiastical or civil, in all causes doth appertain;" and the prerogative thus assigned to the Crown is further explained by identifying it with that which is said to be seen "to have been given always to all godly princes in Holy Scripture by God Himself, that they should rule all states and degrees committed to their charge by God, whether they be ecclesiastical or temporal, and restrain with the civil sword the stubborn and evildoers."

The governing power and legislature of the realm have never departed from the principle of this supremacy. It has been found consistent with the preservation of the just rights of the Church of England, and with full security to its ministers of ample scope and liberty to exercise the spiritual powers with which they are invested by commission from their heavenly Lord and Master. It has been the source of invaluable blessings in the religious and social and political welfare of our people.

Long may the principle of this supremacy be permitted to flourish and maintain its ground among us; and loyal and hearty the submission of our ministers and people to it. Long may it

continue to be the proud boast of our country, that our kings and queens are nursing fathers and nursing mothers to the Church in their dominions. Long may we enjoy the blessing of a legislature not indifferent to the religious welfare of the people, determined to maintain Christianity as part and parcel of the law of the land, guarding the application of the fabrics of our churches and of their endowments to their proper uses, securing both in the teaching of the ministers of the Church and in the services of public worship the "form of sound words," which the voice of the nation in Parliament has deliberately sanctioned.

It is a relief to turn from the consideration of things which are often the occasion of strife; and say a word or two in conclusion about matters upon which there is little or no difference of opinion among us, and which stir the inner springs of high thought which flow within us in our happiest moments.

We are apt, in questions of religion, to attach too much importance to small things, and to be quick in struggling for the ascendancy of our own views about them; not considering how few and simple are the really fundamental and necessary principles of the Gospel, with which its ministers ought always to be strengthening and nourishing their own souls and the souls of the people among whom they labour.

We live in an age when the work of the wise

providence of God in the so-called processes of nature is laid open to the apprehension of inquirers with greater clearness and certainty of knowledge than at any former time ; and there is nothing more obvious to those who have prosecuted such inquiries with success, or who have made themselves acquainted with the results of the investigations of other persons, than the simplicity of the principles and processes by which the natural world is governed.

The experience of men of science has made it abundantly clear to them that the order of nature, as we call it, is simple. What is complicated in theory is not true. The laws by which the natural world is governed are few in number and of sublime simplicity. The discovery of truth in such matters is made by getting rid of complications. In proportion as we advance in knowledge we are satisfied that the truth is plain and simple, and capable of being expressed in few words.

I think that what is thus proved to be true in natural things may be said of spiritual things also, and of the processes and work of our heavenly Father in dealing with the souls of men in matters of religion. All elaborate theories are unworthy of our confidence. The discovery of truth is made in spiritual things, as in natural things, by clearing away the complications of the growth of error. In proportion as we make progress in our know-

ledge of Divine things their simplicity becomes apparent to us. The laws by which the souls of living men are governed, in the system of love and mercy which the Gospel has established, are plain and simple, and capable of being expressed in few words.

Who, that seeks for the knowledge of the truth of Divine things in the Word of God in Scripture, can fail to be struck by the evidence of this simplicity, as he reads the short, yet full and pregnant sentences, in which the whole Gospel seems to be enunciated continually in many passages of the teaching of our Lord and His Apostles?

Think of "the word of faith" which St. Paul preached: "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved;"[1] and again, "I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the scriptures;"[2] and again, when he describes the practical life and conversation of Christians, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me."[3]

The knowledge thus made clear to us of the

[1] Rom. x. 9. [2] 1 Cor. xv. 3, 4. [3] Gal. ii. 20.

simplicity of the laws by which our heavenly Father governs the souls of men in the Gospel should be allowed to have its full practical effect upon us. It should comfort our own hearts with peace. It should arm us with forbearance in dealing with other persons.

In the midst of the confusion of conflicting opinions upon questions of religion, and of doubts and difficulties which the busy minds of men are always stirring, how reassuring the thought that there is one thin thread, held out in mercy by our heavenly Father's love, to guide the steps of all who take advantage of it to eternal life. While we lay hold of this thread firmly and follow as it leads us, may we not satisfy ourselves by undoubted signs that others, who differ from us in many matters of opinion, are holding it firmly also, and trusting it for guidance to the same bright home on which our hopes are fixed? and shall not our persuasion in this respect urge us to hold out to them the right hand of fellowship, and do all we can to help them?

The wisdom of all experience in the things of religion teaches us to bring into as simple a form as possible the necessary terms of union in "every particular or National Church;" while we hold fast first principles, not to insist upon things which fairly admit of question; to refuse to raise into a place of too great prominence things of secondary importance; to accustom ourselves to think and

talk much about the few main truths which the faithful hold in common, and little about the things on which our opinions differ; to banish and drive away contentions about minor matters, which are always apt to be irritating in proportion to their insignificance. If we would really content ourselves with maintaining things essential, it would surprise many an ardent polemic in his hours of quiet thought to see how few and simple such things really are, and how large is the growth of non-essential matter, which has been allowed to grow up in controversy around the truths which make men wise unto salvation.

We have reason to rejoice, in the present day, that questions of religion are allowed to occupy a large share of the attention of thinking men among us, because, however slow the process, we cannot doubt that the honest inquirer will at length discover truth. We see, it is true, on the one hand, faith unworthy of the name, such as verges upon superstition, resting on no foundation with which reason can be satisfied, or demanding that the things of the Spirit shall be made subject to the cognisance of our senses. We see, on the other hand, a spurious philosophy rejecting faith, and refusing to take into sufficient consideration the higher faculties and affections of human nature, which, by the very laws of their being, are not, nor can be, subject to the dominion of sense. But if there is one thing more than another upon which, under such circumstances, it becomes the

ministers of the Gospel to dwell, and direct the attention of their people to it, in order to show the true character of real faith, it is the power of the Gospel practically upon the hearts and lives of those who submit themselves to it.

No one of unprejudiced judgment can withstand the argument of a consistent, holy life. We say, without fear of contradiction, that in proportion as the main simple doctrines of the Gospel are put in active use by the believer (apart from the accretions which have been allowed to grow up around them), the world of living men would present the picture of heaven upon earth. Righteousness, peace, and joy would flourish and make us happy. What will not love to Christ, and love to man for Christ's sake, enable those who are urged by these principles to do and suffer? Can it be, we say, that the teaching is erroneous which produces such results? that, however mixed with error in minor matters, there is not a pure source of truth from which these results are seen to flow? The teacher must have come from God, in whom we put our faith, and whose lessons we try to communicate to others.

My reverend brethren will allow me to draw their attention to one remark, suggested by this thought, in reference to the question of ritual in religious service.

We are accustomed to say that all teaching of morality, if it is to be sufficient and effective, must be based upon religion. We rest our hopes of

training the young in the ways of virtue upon the opportunities which we have of instructing them in the principles of religion, and of accustoming them to take part in the work of prayer and praise in acts of public worship. Our belief and our practice in this respect are beyond all question right, but the converse of the proposition demands attention also. As we estimate the strength and value of principles of morality by their connection with religious observances and teaching, so may we form a just opinion of the soundness of religious training by the moral effects which are seen to follow from it. It is an undoubted fact that the exact observance of forms of religion, however perfect the theory of such forms, does not of itself ensure personal holiness in either ministers or people. The world is full of instances of the want of necessary connection between the observance of forms of religious service, and the morality which approves itself to an enlightened conscience. There is no sadder page in the history of the outward Church of Christ than that which describes the entire want of effect every now and then, among large masses of people, of forms of religious observances upon the hearts and lives of those who use them. And yet this sad page of history is full of warning to wise men. The routine of religious services, if it does not quicken and stir the soul, may harden it and lead to evil. You may have perfect choirs, a faultless intonation, frequent celebrations of the Lord's Supper, a ritual adapted, as you think, with

consummate skill to impress the mind with reverence; and yet all these things may be found, in many a sad instance, co-existent with careless or immoral living on the part of priests and people.

The ministers of the Gospel should never cease to hold these sad facts of warning before their eyes. It is their task of duty above all things to be teachers of righteousness. Their efforts, to be successful, must be directed to awaken the conscience, to instruct the mind and heart. Ritual in religious worship is only a means to an end. The "true worshipping" of God, as our incomparable Litany reminds us, is to be found in "righteousness and holiness of life." Let not that which should be our help in devotion, be allowed to become a substitute for it. Let not the vital growth of holy living be hindered by a lifeless observance of forms, by which in their original intention it was designed to be encouraged.

"I like Epictetus' counsel well," wrote Archbishop Bramhall, "that the sheep should not brag how much they have eaten, or what an excellent pasture they do go in, but show it in their lamb and wool."

Let me add one word, in conclusion, for our mutual comfort and encouragement, as we look at the end of our faith, to which we are all approaching.

It cannot be, in the course of nature, that we should all meet again at another Visitation. Before the prescribed time of three years shall

have passed away many of us will have ceased from our labours, and our places will have been filled by others. Let us look firmly for "that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ." The time is at hand for many of us, when we shall no longer see through a glass darkly. Mysteries will be unfolded to us, which the conditions of human nature now prevent us from looking into; the mystery of the incarnation, the mystery of our Lord's atonement, the mystery of the Lord's Supper, the mystery of life in Christ quickening the souls of believers in this world, the mystery of the spiritual body, and of life in the open presence of our Lord for ever. All these things of mystery, which a vain philosophy, conversant only with things which are to perish with the using, counts as foolishness, but of which the eye of faith sees clear intimations in the history of the human race from the beginning;[1] and which the experience of life in Christ confirms to the apprehension of believers with convictions which cannot be shaken; all these things of mystery, I say, will be revealed plainly for our never-ending adoration, when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and death shall have been swallowed up in victory.

[1] *μυριοι σημαντορες, καταγγελεις, ἑτοιμασται, προδρομοι, ἀνωθεν εκ καταβολης κοσμου δι' ἐργων, δια λογων, προμηνυοντες, προφητευοντες.* —Clem. Alex.

A CHARGE

DELIVERED TO

THE CLERGY AND CHURCHWARDENS OF THE DIOCESE OF WORCESTER

At his Visitation in June, 1880

BY

HENRY, LORD BISHOP OF WORCESTER

RIVINGTONS
WATERLOO PLACE, LONDON
Oxford and Cambridge
MDCCCLXXX

My Reverend Brethren of the Clergy
and my Brethren of the Laity,—

I think myself happy in being permitted to meet you once more in Visitation, and to have the opportunity of expressing my grateful thanks for the considerate kindness with which my ministrations have been received in the diocese during the past three years.

Difficult and anxious questions have not failed during that time to present themselves for consideration; as, indeed, might have been expected, and I may almost say a matter of course; for neither any clergyman in his parish, nor any Bishop in his diocese, can hope to be free, in these days, from the pressure of questions which try our faith and patience and test the integrity of the principles upon which our ministerial work is founded.

I look back, however, with joy upon the time passed since my last Visitation, because the retrospect brings before me the satisfaction of having witnessed much good work done, together with the pleasure of much kindly intercourse with clergy and laity in the discharge of official duty. I feel

that in every parish of a large diocese I have kind and encouraging friends, who are always ready to give their Bishop a hearty welcome; who are willing also to overlook shortcomings, and give him credit at least for upright intentions, even if they find themselves obliged to regard the conclusions to which he may have been led in particular cases, as founded upon a wrong judgment.

I look forward, also, to the future of ministerial work in our Church with joyful hope, because I think I see many encouraging signs of a good foundation for such hope in the disposition and relations of ministers and people to each other. We have long had reason to admire the earnest zeal of our clergy and the spirit of devotion to their sacred work, which has seemed to grow together with the growth of difficulties under which their work has been carried on; and though in some cases zeal may have outrun discretion and given rise to the adoption of new and unauthorized observances in the conduct of divine service, is there not a more general consent now than heretofore among our clergy to repress extravagance, and seek to win the confidence of their people by avoiding all things which needlessly give offence? Am I mistaken in believing that there is less estrangement from one another than heretofore, among persons who have been accustomed to look at the things of religion from different points of view; less pertinacity among us in insisting every one upon

the correctness of his own views and condemning others; a more fervent charity, which shows itself in making us look not only on our own things, but every man also on the things of others? Is there not, also, a deeper and more widely spread feeling of indignant shame among Churchmen, than heretofore, at the instances, happily few in number, in which obedience to constituted authorities has been refused? and may we not regard the prevalence of such feeling as some sort of guarantee that the great body at least of our clergy are determined to maintain the supremacy of law and order, as the best safeguard of the liberty which they enjoy far more than the clergy of any Church in Christendom, and most fruitful in promise of success for the holy work to which they are devoted?

The review of diocesan work for the last three years, which the occasion of a Visitation seems to call for, is not without encouragement.

Confirmations.

The number of persons confirmed in the last three years was 21,381, a considerable increase above the number (18,811) confirmed in the three years preceding the last Visitation; that number itself, also, showing an increase above the number (17,510) confirmed in the three years then preceding.

When we consider the great pains now taken in preparing candidates for confirmation, and of which their behaviour at the time of the service seems to give ample proof, this result must be deemed satisfactory. Consideration, however, of the returns from the several parishes supplying candidates shows that in many cases the number presented is not in due proportion to the population; and that in town parishes particularly the number of male candidates ought to be made to show a large increase.

Ordinations.

The number of persons admitted into holy orders as deacons in the diocese during the last three years was 122; of whom seventy-six were graduates, thirty-two had obtained certificates from theological colleges, and fourteen were literates.

The number of deacons ordained in the diocese during the three years preceding the last Visitation was 121; of whom ninety-two were graduates, twenty-one had obtained certificates from theological colleges, and eight were literates.

I have also admitted into priest's orders during the last three years twelve persons who had been ordained deacons in other dioceses.

The figures show that, while the whole number of persons admitted into deacon's orders for

curacies in the diocese was nearly the same in each of the two successive periods of three years, the number of graduates was considerably less in the latter period than in the former, while the number of candidates from theological colleges and of literates has proportionately increased.

If this result may be taken to show that candidates for holy orders are less disposed than formerly to seek for education at our universities, or that graduates of our universities are less disposed than formerly to apply for admission into holy orders, the fact in either case is much to be regretted.

Theological colleges, however well supplied with teaching power, and with whatever care conducted, can never supply the place of the training given at our universities. Long and intimate acquaintance with the University of Cambridge enables me to say, with confidence, that to those who have been disposed to take advantage of the teaching, a large and able staff of teachers of theology has for many years presented an unrivalled opportunity for the acquisition of knowledge of divine things, while the simultaneous culture of other branches of learning has not only supplied valuable information, but has strengthened and prepared the mind for successful work of whatever kind in the years of after life. Add to this consideration that of the mixture in the same university or college of students intending to

pursue different walks in life, each class of such students giving out and receiving influence from the others; and you cannot fail to regard it as a thing of great importance that our universities should continue to be, what they long have been with the happiest results, the schools of training for our clergy, sending out continually a supply of men qualified to command influence and win respect from all sorts and conditions of men, as they do the holy work with which they are put in trust.

We are sometimes told, indeed, that men of liberal education are less inclined than formerly to seek admission into holy orders in our Church; that there is a growing indifference to religion, or disbelief, which prevents many of our men of cultivated minds from adopting, as the main work of their lives, the study of divine things, or the active labour of the pastoral care of parishes.

There may be some foundation for this remark in the actual circumstances of our social life at present; though one may be excused from asking whether a similar lack of interest in what requires serious and patient work is not perceptible in many of our young men with regard to other professions also. An old man may be pardoned for being "laudator temporis acti," but I cannot help thinking that in days gone by, when the so-called amusements of life were not allowed to occupy so much time and thought during the process of

education in schools and colleges, more serious views of the duties and responsibilities of life prevailed in early years, and our young men accustomed themselves more to look forward to hard work in a good cause as the happiest and most worthy occupation for which they could prepare themselves. My brethren of the clergy at least, who have had experience of the work of the ministry, will not be slow to acknowledge and avow that no work can be happier, more worthy of the best efforts of the most highly cultured minds, more attractive or more satisfactory than the work of a minister in the Church of England.

Church Building and Restoration.

After what had been done in the diocese in the course of previous years in the way of building and restoring churches, we might, perhaps, have escaped blame if we had little to show of the same work accomplished since the time of our last meeting in Visitation.

I rejoice, however, to say that the good work has not languished. There has been no lack of effort, nor failure of success in what has been attempted. What has been done in former years seems rather to have acted as a spur and incentive to zeal in further efforts. During the year 1879 in particular, I had the happiness of consecrating more, and more worthy, new churches, and of

witnessing the completion of more numerous and larger works of restoration than in any former year of the time for which I have had the privilege to serve as bishop.

The new church at Milverton, built and endowed for the use of a new parish by the pious liberality of one family; the new churches at Rugby, at Upton-on-Severn, at Wribbenhall, at Suckley; the beautiful little church at Winderton in the parish of Brailes, built at the sole expense of one whom it was my privilege to admit not long ago into holy orders; these buildings will remain monuments, as well of the piety of the time in which we live, as of the skill of the accomplished architects who planned them, and of the sound, enduring work of the builders to whom the execution of the plans was entrusted.

The long-continued and heavy depression of trade has prevented the Church Extension Society of Birmingham from adding one to the list of churches consecrated in last year. The ever-increasing wants of that great town, with its suburbs growing in every direction, seem to demand the formation of at least one new parish in every year, with its own church and endowment and machinery for bringing the ministrations of religion within easy reach of the crowded population, among whom, it is to be feared, many are perishing for lack of knowledge. Let us hope that the hands may be strengthened of those who are trying

to meet the evil; and that the revival of trade may awaken fresh zeal in showing honour to the Giver of every good and perfect gift.

It would occupy more time than that for which I dare to ask your attention, if I attempted to describe in detail the improvements and enlargements and restorations of old churches which last year witnessed. But I cannot refrain from expressing my satisfaction at the completion of the restoration of the remarkable church of Brailes, which has at length rewarded the unwearied self-denying efforts of the vicar, continued through many years of unexampled perseverance. The names of many other churches in which good work was brought to completion in last year, will occur to those who hear me; the churches of St. Jude, St. Matthias, and Bishop Ryder in the town of Birmingham, Fenny Compton, Packington, Preston Bagot, Reddal Hill, Shenington, Solihull, Tardebigge, and St. Clement's in the city of Worcester. In all these cases and in many others, where progress has been made, though the work is not yet finished, I feel that I do not err in saying that the whole diocese joins me in thanking those who have spent time and thought and money on the work, and in congratulating them upon the success with which their efforts have been rewarded.

Choral Service.

The mention of new and restored churches naturally leads our thoughts to the great object of the service of God in divine worship, to which they are devoted.

The law of our land has ordered that, while in some things of minor importance, exercise of discretion is allowed to the officiating minister, and to the authority to which ordinary jurisdiction is committed, divine worship in all our churches should be conducted mainly after one pattern. I suppose that no one among us doubts the wisdom of this arrangement, or the advantage of it in maintaining unity among the members of the Church of England.

My reverend brethren will not take it amiss if I venture to advise that the discretion, which the rubrics of our Prayer-book permit, should be exercised always in a wise and cautious spirit. Persons who have been long accustomed to one form of service, cannot easily be led to look upon any change with favour. Innovations, though confessedly within lawful limits, are apt to excite alarm, far more perhaps, in most cases, than the occasion really warrants ; yet the prudent minister, who is anxious mainly to win the confidence of his people and to use his opportunities in the most effectual way for their edification, will not leave out of sight the feeling of dislike of change to

which I refer, nor refuse to regard even what he may be tempted to consider the prejudices of his people.

Let me ask attention for an instant in particular to the introduction of what is called choral service in our churches. Careful and extended observation has satisfied me that in most of our country parishes at least choral service fails to find acceptance with the more devout members of the congregation. We acknowledge with gratitude the readiness of members of the congregation, who think that they have the gift of song, to take pains in preparing themselves, and to do the part of singing with praiseworthy perseverance in our services. The help of such persons in encouraging the psalmody of the people in well-known hymns is of great value, and wins universal favour. But the so-called intoning of the minister, the chanting of the Psalms, the loud and not unfrequently irreverent responses of the younger members of the choir, awaken no devotion, and hinder rather than help the heavenward aspirations of the people. The patience of the more devout members of the congregation is often sorely tried, while they lament the loss of the natural easy flow of voice which, devout itself, kindles devotion in others, and carries them with it in their approaches to the throne of grace.

Neither will a word of warning here, perhaps, be considered out of place if I venture to ask my

brethren of the clergy to beware how they submit themselves to the dominant wills of choirs, who not unnaturally like to have their own way, and are sometimes tempted to impose conditions of service on the assumption that their help is indispensable to the wants of minister and people.

In what I have said upon this subject I hope that my brethren of the clergy will not mistake my meaning. My desire is to recommend and encourage such free and full communication between a minister and his people respecting his conduct of service in divine worship as may best promote the great object of edification and devotion. If no pains are taken to learn from time to time the views and wishes of the people, to watch the effect upon them of the manner of conducting service, and to order his own ministrations and the ministrations of those who help him accordingly, the minister may have the satisfaction of conducting everything according to his own will; but the satisfaction will be dearly purchased if it is gained at the cost of what good and true men value above all price in the attachment and confidence which make his people accept readily what he tells them.

Appropriation of Seats in Churches.

You are aware, my brethren, that effort has been made persistently for many years to establish

the system of free and unappropriated seats as applicable to all our churches. The customary means have been put in use to call public attention to the subject. The advocates of the system are unceasing in their exertions to promote the attainment of their object by the circulation of pamphlets, by addresses at public meetings, by bringing influence to bear upon the election of churchwardens, and by other well-known methods of exciting interest in what they advocate.

I have not failed to take advantage of opportunities to learn the effect of the system in cases where it has been tried, and I have no hesitation in expressing my belief that it has failed in general to produce the good results which its advocates are fond of promising. Granting that in particular cases and under special circumstances the good may be said to outweigh the evil, I think that the system is far from being suited for adoption as a general measure in all our parish churches. In the arguments urged in support of change I see no sufficient reason for departing from the well-known system, which has the sanction of established law and custom, and which entrusts the assignment of seats in Churches generally to the discretion of the churchwardens as parochial officers of the ordinary. It is the well-understood duty of the churchwardens to make the seats as available as possible for the accommodation of the parishioners, having

regard, in their arrangements, to the respective wants of families.

In many of our town parishes the sad necessity is found of providing income for the ministers by means of pew rents. I heartily wish that all pew rents could be abolished and that every seat in every church could be declared free, as far as regards the payment of money for the privilege of joining in divine worship; but those who know the circumstances of the cures of parishes in large towns are forbidden, alas! to cherish a reasonable hope that such pew rents can be all at once and summarily abandoned.

In cases, however, where pew rents are unknown, as in most of our parish churches, and where no necessity for them can be said to exist, experience has, I think, proved abundantly that the system of unassigned seats in churches is not favourable to the efficient working of the pastoral care of parishes. The attachment of the people to the service of their own parish church is weakened if the head of a family cannot take his children and dependants with him, sure of accommodation for them in their own accustomed seats; the minister is placed at a disadvantage in ascertaining and securing the regular attendance of his people; a serious check is put to the force of united systematic parochial effort in works of benevolence; the bond of union seems to lose its strength, which ought to unite firmly the minister

with his people and the members of the congregation with one another.

The best thanks of the Church and of our congregations are due to those gentlemen who, undertaking the office of churchwardens, give time and thought to the important duty of assigning seats in church to the inhabitants of parishes. Do not be afraid, let me say to them, to vary the assignment of seats from time to time, as the circumstances of the families of parishioners are altered. Do not allow assigned seats to remain unoccupied, if the persons to whom they are assigned do not come in time for service. Take care to leave a sufficient number of unassigned seats for the use of irregular attendants. In cases, not perhaps infrequent in these days, where, owing to the rapid increase of population in a parish, the whole accommodation is insufficient, do the best you can to provide for pressing wants. Difficult questions must be expected to arise continually. Conflicting claims are often urged with pertinacity. Persons who do not get exactly what they wish are unreasonable in refusing to make allowance for difficulties; they are apt to overlook the just claims of other persons in urging what they consider their own rights.

I am glad to bear willing testimony to the upright intentions and patient efforts of churchwardens in many cases which have been brought before me. In proportion to the difficulty of

arranging satisfactorily the assignment of seats in churches is the credit due to those officers of the Church who bring to the solution of it a firm and sober judgment; and in proportion to the efficiency of their services in this respect ought to be the gratitude of those for whose benefit the task is undertaken.

Elementary Education.

The subject of elementary education continues to excite unabated interest in all our parishes. Clergy and laity alike are watching with attention the system which is now at work; most of us anxious above all things, for the sake of the welfare of our body politic in general, as well as of that of the individual children taught, that in every school, whether supported by voluntary effort or managed by a School Board, the teaching of religion should be recognized as an essential and important part of the instruction given.

Every one who has had the opportunity of observing the system and course of teaching now maintained in our parish schools, and comparing it with what it was in days gone by, must be prepared to admit that the instruction of our children in religion is far more real and satisfactory than it was in most cases before the passing of the recent Elementary Education Acts. The discussions, occasioned by those measures of legislation, have

not been without good effect at least in this particular.

I am disposed to attribute much of the beneficial change which we witness in the efficiency of religious teaching, to the system which we have adopted, in common with other dioceses, of employing paid inspectors to ascertain, by frequent personal examinations of schools, the quantity and quality of the religious instruction given, and of rewarding by prizes the attainments in religious knowledge of pupil teachers and day and Sunday scholars.

We enjoyed for seven years the benefit of the services of a chief inspector, Mr. Houghton, who was found to possess special qualifications for the work; and I am sure that I express the feeling of the managers and teachers of schools throughout the diocese, when I say that we owe him a large debt of gratitude for the unwearied labour and devotion with which he applied his remarkable skill and ability to the fulfilment of his duty.

The success which has attended the system of continued periodical inspection of our schools by qualified inspectors may be estimated in some degree by the following figures:—

In the first year of such inspection (1871), the number of departments inspected having been 499; 133 were found to be good, while no less than 208 were reported as inferior or bad in religious teaching.

In the last year (1879), the system having had time to work, out of 656 school departments inspected, no less than 509 were reported to be excellent or good, while only fifteen were said to deserve the character of indifferent or bad in religious teaching.

I congratulate the friends of religious education and the managers of our schools on this very satisfactory result. We could not have greater encouragement to go on in the course which we have pursued. We have abundant reason to look with confidence for good results in future, if we can preserve in full efficiency the system from which we have derived such benefit already.

I need not say that the work of inspecting schools in religious knowledge, and of superintending and conducting the examinations for prize schemes throughout the large diocese of Worcester requires great exertion. The accomplishment of it is a severe strain upon the staff which we employ, assisted though they are by the ready and effective help of many able volunteers. The scantiness of our resources does not allow us to employ more than one chief inspector, who devotes his whole time to his office, together with two assistant inspectors, who act in concert with him for a limited amount of work. We are happy in having secured the services of able men for these offices, who add to long experience the advantage of taking pleasure in their work, and who have not

failed to win the confidence of managers and teachers and of the children also, so as to ensure full trust in the impartiality of their reports and respectful attention to the advice and suggestions which they offer.

Having referred to the scantiness of our resources, I must not lose the opportunity of reminding my hearers that the maintenance of our system of diocesan inspection of schools and prizes depends entirely upon the contributions of those who appreciate its value. We have no funds for keeping it at work other than the donations and subscriptions entrusted to our Boards of Education for the purpose. It seems to be my duty to say that considerable ground exists at the present time for fear respecting the ability of our Boards of Education to continue the discharge of existing obligations. If the agency which we employ for encouraging religious education in our schools is to be kept up efficiently, increased efforts must be made. It is not too much to expect that every parish which enjoys the benefit of inspection of its school and of the admission of its children to our prize schemes, ought to do something annually in support of the system, whether by contributions directly from school funds, or by the subscriptions and donations of individual parishioners. The plan of collecting money for the purpose by offertories in church always seems to me to deserve especial commendation, so that every one may have the

opportunity from time to time of giving as God has given to him, and the poorer members of our congregations may have the satisfaction of showing their interest in the work, and feel that they are taking part, no matter how small, with others in supporting a system from which their children are deriving benefit of inestimable value.

In looking at the accounts published in the last five years by the Boards of Education for the archdeaconries of Worcester and Coventry, of funds available for the promotion of religious education in our schools, I find the balances remaining from the donations of former years continually decreasing. In the archdeaconry of Coventry, the Diocesan Inspection Fund, administered by the Church Extension Society, may be said to be altogether exhausted; and the annual income from subscriptions is far from being sufficient to defray the necessary payments. In the archdeaconry of Worcester, though the prospect of our being obliged to diminish or discontinue the usual payments is not so alarmingly immediate, yet the steady decrease of the balance in the hands of the Board of Education calls for the serious attention of those who desire not to see the system of diocesan inspection languish.

In speaking at the last Visitation on the subject of elementary education, I expressed my regret that the School Board of Birmingham, taking advantage of the omission in the Elementary

Education Acts of all provision for religious observances and teaching, and having persuaded themselves to believe that it is possible and desirable to separate religious teaching altogether from secular instruction in the education of the young, had determined to apply the teaching in its schools to secular subjects only.

I ventured at the same time to express my hope that at no distant day the School Board of Birmingham would be led to see its error in this respect, and take a view of the question of religious teaching more in accordance with the feeling which is almost universal in the country, and not deny to the children taught in its schools the inestimable advantage of turning their attendance there to profit by learning such lessons and acquiring such habits of piety as may guide them in after life to act upon those principles of religion which are the only sure source of happiness to themselves, and "the only sure stay of a well-ordered commonwealth."

My hearers will have learnt with satisfaction that the hope, which I thus ventured to express, has not been disappointed. The School Board of Birmingham, urged by the strong feeling on the subject expressed by a large number of inhabitants of the town, has published an acknowledgment that moral and religious teaching is a necessity in the education of children, and ought to be provided for in all schools by whatever funds

supported; and they have directed accordingly that in all schools subject to their management lessons from the Bible should be read daily as an indispensable part of the system of instruction.

Let me hope that the few School Boards in other parts of the country, which have been heretofore encouraged, by the example of Birmingham, to try to exclude religious teaching from their schools, may follow the same course. May we not venture further to indulge the hope, which was expressed recently by the Worcester Board of Education in one of its excellent annual reports—the report for the year 1878—that "the time may again come when elementary religious instruction may not merely be permitted, but required to be given as a condition of the Government grant in every aided school"?

Ecclesiastical Legislation.

Since our last meeting in Visitation two Acts have received the sanction of Parliament, with which it is desirable that the clergy and churchwardens should make themselves acquainted.

One of these Acts, passed in the session of 1878, and bearing the title of "An Act to Amend and Further Extend the Act for the Commutation of Tithes," contains useful provisions for the voluntary and compulsory redemption of rent-charge awarded in lieu of tithes.

In every case, where land is subject to a rent-

charge not exceeding twenty shillings, and the owner of such land, or the owner of such rent-charge makes application to the Tithe Commissioners for the purpose, they are empowered to order the rent-charge to be redeemed by the payment of a sum of money equal to twenty-five times the amount of it.

In the case of land subject to a rent-charge exceeding twenty shillings, the Tithe Commissioners may order the rent-charge to be redeemed by the payment of a sum of money not less than twenty-five times the amount of it, if the owner of the land and the owner of the rent-charge jointly make application for such order; provided that, if the owner of the rent-charge be the incumbent of a benefice, the consents be obtained previously of the Bishop of the diocese and the patron of the benefice.

A further provision is added for the case of land subject to rent-charge being divided into numerous portions for the sake of building or other purposes. In every such case, if the Tithe Commissioners should be of opinion that no further apportionment or division of the rent-charge can be made conveniently, they are empowered to order the redemption of it by the payment of a sum of money not less than twenty-five times the amount of it without limitation as to the amount of the rent-charge and upon the sole application of the owner of it.

The second Act to which I refer, "The Public Health (Interments) Act, 1879," has excited much interest, and may perhaps be found of great service in avoiding or settling disputed questions.

The text itself of the Act is brief, consisting of only three sections; but inasmuch as it is to be construed as one with "The Public Health Act, 1875," and also incorporates "The Cemeteries Clauses Act, 1847," it embraces many important regulations and provisions respecting the burial of the dead.

No occasion for putting the Act in force has yet been found in the diocese of Worcester; and it is probable that proceedings under it may disclose the need of further provisions respecting the functions of the clergy in places where it is adopted; but we may hope that a favourable opportunity is given by the measure, which those who seek for peace will not be slow to take advantage of, for putting an end to controversy.

The Act gives facilities for the provision of ground for burying the dead in any parish or part of a parish, or district comprising two or more parishes or parts of parishes. It treats the subject of the burial of the dead mainly as a sanitary measure and without reference to the question of the religious rites with which burials should be honoured. The wants of the members of all and every religious denomination are to be provided for. The ground assigned for the use

of members of the Church of England is to be consecrated according to customary forms, if such consecration be deemed desirable. In such cases a chapel is to be built and a chaplain appointed. Or the ground may be left without consecration, with liberty for the members of every religious denomination to bury their dead with their own accustomed form of service.

The Burial Acts of former years have long since made similar provision for the burial of the dead, whether members of the Church of England or not; and in almost all large towns and populous places advantage has been taken of these Acts to provide cemeteries sufficient for the wants of the inhabitants. "The Public Health (Interments) Act, 1879," seems intended to accomplish the same result for all parishes and places, whether in town or country, without the costly machinery of Burial Boards, and with many improvements in procedure.

I confess that I have never consecrated part of a cemetery provided by a Burial Board without pain in observing the hard line of separation, which divides the portion assigned to the use of members of the Church of England from that which is devoted to the burial of other persons, and imposes the necessity of erecting two chapels for the use of the respective classes of mourners in the preparatory service. I cannot help looking forward with interest to what may be the ultimate effect of the recent Act in effacing this line of

separation. Is it a vain hope that the time may not be distant when we may have in every district, whether parish or part of a parish, or combination of parishes or parts of parishes, burial-places for our dead, open to common use; every such burial-place far removed, perhaps, from our churches and places of divine worship, provided with its one building for preparatory services; the ground no longer divided into separate portions, with reference to different religious creeds, but open, under due superintendence, to the use of all inhabitants of the district alike, every one having the right to be buried by his own minister, and according to the religious rites of the communion in which he lived?

If the Act of 1879 be wisely administered, I cannot help looking forward with hope to such a result in future. I should have been glad if our old churchyards, surrounding our parish churches, could have been kept for the use to which they have been hitherto devoted, the burial of the dead according to the rites of the Church of England; though I am far from being alarmed at the evil which is anticipated by many from the provision of the Bill now before Parliament for authorizing Christian and orderly services to be conducted by others than ministers of the Church of England. But at least let the new provision for burials which the state of a large number of our old burial-grounds will render imperative at no distant date,

be such as "The Public Health (Interments) Act" seems to urge us to adopt, or at least gives us the liberty of making.

The law of the land has secured effectually one great object which the act of consecration has always been deemed to accomplish, the perpetual appropriation of the ground to the sacred purpose to which it is devoted, free from profane and common uses. May we not rightly consider every particular grave, in which the body of a departed friend is placed, to be consecrated by the service which we use in burying it; and may we not look forward with joyful hope to the unspeakable comfort of realizing to ourselves henceforward more fully than we have hitherto done in our course and order of burial that "communion of saints" which embraces many who, though now differing from us in forms of worship, and not able to see divine things altogether as we see them, are yet really a part of the Body of Christ, and will be recognized as such by Him hereafter, when we see Him as He is?

Ecclesiastical Judgments.

The last two years have been remarkable for the conflict of opinion among eminent men in judgments delivered in courts of law upon ecclesiastical cases.

Important questions have been raised respecting

the proper mode of proceeding in the Court of Arches after the issue of monitions in cases of disobedience to the law; and also respecting the right interpretation of words used in "The Clergy Discipline Act, 1840," to declare the power or duty of a Bishop when complaint against a person in holy orders is brought before him.

The eminent judges who have had to deal with and decide these questions have differed in opinion. It is our part to accept with deference the final decision of the supreme tribunal in each case, and to submit ourselves to it as the best result which the fallible minds of men enable us to attain.

The discussion of difficult questions by men of well-exercised, quick intellect, accustomed to weigh the force of evidence and to elicit truth from the arguments of conflicting advocates, has at least the advantage of throwing light upon many collateral subjects in the matters brought before them. While we follow with interest the courses of thought which seem to have guided eminent judges through the several stages of each case to the final decision, we feel that much valuable matter has been accumulated, and at least a good foundation laid for a satisfactory result if occasion should arise for legislation in the future.

We must take it for granted at present, though the supreme tribunal of the House of Lords has not yet given final judgment in the case, that the Archbishop's Court of Arches may proceed at any

time to judgment upon a monition previously issued without the institution of a new suit.

We must also take it for granted, and here the final decision has been pronounced from which there is no appeal, that the Clergy Discipline Act of 1840 allows a Bishop full and complete discretion to determine whether or not proceedings should be taken under that Act against a person in holy orders upon the complaint of any party that he has offended against the laws ecclesiastical.

It will be a happy result of this last-mentioned decision if it has the effect of restoring to our Church in some degree the character of an Episcopal Church, from which there is reason to lament that, in some respects, it has in recent times considerably departed. The claims advanced in favour of the Convocations of clergy, summoned at the same time with Parliament, together with some sad instances of the persistent and entire refusal of submission on the part of clergymen to episcopal control or counsel, have made many thinking persons doubt whether our Church deserves the name of Episcopal, as interpreted by the law and practice of early days, and suggest that some other title for its form of government would be more appropriate; if, indeed, it be not, as unfriendly critics say, a body in which every officiating minister considers himself at liberty to put his own interpretation upon the laws by which he professes to be

governed, and to do that which is right in his own eyes.

Happy, I repeat, will be the result of the recent judgment of the House of Lords, if it disposes us, laity and clergy alike, to acknowledge in the Church of England the true character of an Episcopal Church, in which it shall be the high task and office of a Bishop, involving, no doubt, the gravest responsibility and requiring entire freedom from all but the purest motives, to counsel, guide, and control the clergy over whom the good providence and grace of his Heavenly Master have been pleased to place him. "The Bishop is the person," it was well said by one of the eminent judges who delivered their opinions in the House of Lords, "who above all others has the means and opportunity of knowing the character and conduct of an offending clergyman, the condition and circumstances of his parish, and the probable motives of those who charge the offence; and above all, whose position may enable him to interpose admonition and advice, which may render recourse to the law unnecessary."

Good will it be for the stability of our Church, for the peace and order of our parishes, and for the spiritual welfare of our people in every place, if the recent judgment be accepted and acted upon heartily by clergy and laity alike, when it affirms it to have been the intention of the Legislature in 1840, to "confide the discipline of the clergy to

the good sense and good faith of the Bishops, upon whom in the earlier history of the Church the task of correction exclusively devolved."

Revision of the Prayer-book.

The question of the revision of our Book of Common Prayer has been long under discussion, and has occupied the earnest attention of many thoughtful persons.

After much consideration I seem to have satisfied myself that there are valid reasons why the attempt to revise should not be made at present.

The revision of the Prayer-book cannot stand alone. It involves the necessity of revising other distinctive formularies of the Church of England. The course and process of revision may have serious effect upon the relations between Church and State, and go to alter the happy position in which they now stand to each other.

Our Prayer-book has been found for a great number of years a bond of union for Churchmen who hold different views upon many matters of Church polity and doctrine. Ever since the time when our Legislature determined that there should be one form of divine worship in the churches of all our dioceses and one set of Articles, binding all our clergy, "for the avoiding of diversities of opinion and for the establishing of consent touching true religion," there has been at least outward

union among members of the Church of England, the effect of which has been of great value. Some at least of the services in our Prayer-book—I would instance in particular "The Order of the Administration of the Lord's Supper, or Holy Communion"—have been framed with such exquisite skill and temper as to win the ready acceptance of men of different minds, so that as we worship together in the same church, and use the same form of words, we feel that, notwithstanding many differences, we are really one in heart and spirit in the main matters of religion.

It would be no light thing to destroy or disturb this union. Those who are eager to enter upon the work of revision should be urged to look forward at the things of the future and try to represent to themselves in the view of far-reaching consequences what further and remote effects may follow.

Perhaps there is not one person among us here assembled who does not think that in one or more particulars our Prayer-book might be amended. If we could only get other persons to see the matter as we do (and every person, of course, thinks his own view right), the difficulty would disappear; we should remove what gives offence and enjoy thereafter a more perfect form of service at which no one could be troubled.

The difficulty, of course, consists in the very diversity itself of views, which prevails among

us. When we try to meet one objection, we at once raise others. What some of us think of little value or wrong and at least open to correction, others are prepared to contend for as embodying a capital truth, the omission of which would be an error in any revised edition of the Prayer-book.

The time may come, and perhaps must be expected, in the good providence of our Heavenly Father, when the revision of our Prayer-book, in common with other measures affecting the Church, will be forced upon us. Let us hope that the day is yet distant. Let us, at least, not take part in hastening it by eager desire of change. Let us be content to live and work together, heartily and loyally within the limits of our accustomed forms of service. The bond, which unites us, will suffer a severe strain if we allow ourselves to be divided into parties, each striving for the mastery, each prepared to push its own views to extremes without allowing place for others. Without humility, self-distrust, forbearance, and comprehensive charity our tie of union must be broken; and great may be the calamity which the breach will bring upon us.

It may be remembered that a Bill was prepared and presented to Parliament in the session of last year under the name of "An Act to Provide Facilities for the Amendment from time to time of the Rites and Ceremonies of the Church of England."

The Bill proposed to give to the Archbishops and Bishops and clergy of the provinces of Canterbury and York, in their Convocations, power to prepare from time to time, for the acceptance of the two Houses of Parliament and of the Queen in Council, schemes for such alteration in and additions to the rubrics and directions contained in the Book of Common Prayer, as may seem to them to be required.

I cannot help expressing my alarm at the prospect of any such measure being adopted. If I could think it possible that the sanction of the Legislature should be given to it, I should be distressed for the future of the Church of England.

It is worthy of remark that, while the title of the Bill purports to limit the effect of it to rites and ceremonies, the Bill itself proposes to extend the powers of legislation committed to the Convocations of the clergy so as to embrace the provision of such "additional services and prayers to be used in public worship" as may seem to them to be required. And, in fact, it is obvious that what is presented under the simple form of an amendment of a rite or ceremony, or the alteration of a rubric, may involve serious and vital changes in matters of faith and doctrine.

It would greatly surprise me to find that our Houses of Parliament are willing to divest themselves of the power which they have always possessed and exercised, at least since the time of

the Reformation of the Church of England in the sixteenth century, to initiate if necessary and at least to discuss freely and fully all questions of legislation in things ecclesiastical, and content themselves hereafter with the bare province of simply approving or rejecting what may be laid before them.

If such extraordinary and novel power of initiating changes in our Book of Common Prayer is to be committed to any body of persons armed with authority for the purpose, a serious question would arise in the minds of many whether the Convocations of the clergy as now constituted and proceeding according to their accustomed forms, are in truth the bodies to which matters of such vital interest can be prudently committed. Would it be well that, in framing schemes for the approval of Parliament, the lay members of our Church should be altogether shut out from consultation? Would it be well that the door should be thrown open to agitation "from time to time," as the Bill proposes, without ceasing? Would it be well to give occasion to perpetual controversy in our Convocations respecting disputed questions, as each party in turn struggles to gain ascendancy and obtain the sanction of the Legislature for its own ideas, not unfrequently perhaps magnifying mole-hills into mountains, and urging as the subject of serious legislation things about which true Christian charity would suggest that we had better agree to differ?

Disbelief of Revealed Religion.

I am unwilling to put an end to the remarks which the occasion gives me the opportunity to offer without saying a few words upon a subject which has been and is the cause of grave anxiety to all right-thinking persons; I mean the alleged increase among men of well-informed and cultivated minds of doubt or disbelief of the claims of revealed religion.

I am willing to admit for the purpose which I have in view, that there has been an increase of such doubt or disbelief in recent years. Our clergy in general are not insensible to the danger, and desire to fortify themselves with arguments which may prevail against the evil.

In the present day the utmost latitude is allowed to the free expression of opinion. Moreover, the investigations of men of science in the realms of nature, and the triumphs of acute, far-reaching criticism of the written records of old time, have furnished us with stores of information which were not accessible to men of former days. It must not be denied that in some instances arguments, which once satisfied inquirers, can no longer be relied upon for conviction. No lover of truth will think it right or wise to try to support what he knows to be a righteous cause by proofs which he is not satisfied will bear the weight which it may be sought to place upon them. May we not

almost avow a sense of obligation to an unfriendly critic for showing us that an argument is invalid, because the discovery has led us to rest our defence of what is true upon a firmer and more satisfactory foundation ?

It is too often taken for granted that the extended pursuit of knowledge, whether in science or in literature, is unfavourable to the claims of revealed religion upon us. My experience justifies me in expressing entire disbelief of the assertion. It was my happy lot to live for many years in habits of more or less close intimacy with scholars and men of science who yielded the palm to few in the extent of their attainments; and I have found in the course of a long life no more humble and earnest believers than such men, none more ready to accept the revealed Word of God with simple devotion, and bow down their souls to adopt it as their rule of faith and duty. My literary and scientific friends in Cambridge took a larger and truer view of the actual circumstances of the world of living men than some of later days, who seem to think that their undoubted attainments in one branch of knowledge qualify them to speak with authority upon things in other departments, where, in fact, if not wholly ignorant, they have made but small and superficial progress. Long and deep study of the "fearfully and wonderfully" made frame of man and of the circumstances under which in real life we are

called to act and suffer; long and deep study of the fine qualities of heart and mind and spirit in all human nature, our moral and spiritual instincts, our affections and sympathies, our appreciation of holiness, our irrepressible longings after immortality and converse with the things of heaven; long and deep study of such things, I say, led them to accept the gospel of our Saviour with their whole hearts, resting their firm belief of it, over and above the outward evidences which first gave it footing in the world, upon their conviction of the exquisite adaptation of its teaching to the capabilities and wants of human nature. Such men were content, as such men always will be, to follow the leading of the gospel in the spirit of a little child, satisfied that Jesus Christ was a teacher come from God, and that He has taken of the things of God and shown them unto us.

I believe that a large and true philosophy will always bring the same result. The religion of Jesus Christ stands upon a rock that cannot be shaken. Faith in things unseen, which are eternal, is not hindered or weakened by extended knowledge of things which, being seen, are temporal.

The circumstances of the present time, however, seem to make a word of warning not altogether out of season. You cannot do a greater injury to the cause of revealed religion than by representing as the subject matter of its teaching

doctrines which cannot truly be gathered from what it puts before us. If we mix error with truth in what we deliver to our people, it ought not to surprise us if the discovery of the error prepares them for doubting or disbelieving the truth which was mixed up with it. "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good" should be the special motto of those whose high office it is to set the teaching of revealed religion in a practical form before their hearers. "What arguments would be avoided," wrote Bishop Turton of Ely, in his reply to Cardinal Wiseman on "the Roman Catholic doctrine of the Eucharist," "if writers would but determine not to extract doctrines from Scripture by means of positions which they cannot vindicate to their own consciences in the most solemn moments of reflection!"

The Legislature of this country took an effectual measure to check the progress of disbelief in revealed religion when they passed the Acts against superstitious uses in the early days of the Reformation of the Church of England. Masses satisfactory for the repose of departed spirits, the doctrine of purgatory, and other fond inventions of men, being declared to be no part of the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the superstitious observances engrafted upon such false teaching being forbidden, a weight was thereby removed from the profession of faith in revealed religion which enabled the defenders of it to lift up their heads and triumph.

The Church of England in those days deliberately and entirely rejected the Roman Catholic doctrine of the priesthood. Our Articles of Religion mark its determination in this respect in language as clear as words can make it. We owe it much to the firm tone then uttered in the rejection of "blasphemous fables and dangerous deceits," that the great body of our people have continued stedfast in their belief of revealed religion, because they have felt that they could give satisfactory reasons for it.

But if any of us, my brethren, should be found trying to build again the things which were then destroyed; or even giving rise to suspicion that we regret the loss of what was then rejected, doubt and disbelief will surely raise their heads among us, because confidence will be rudely shaken in the guidance of those whose "lips should keep knowledge." Superstition, whether in belief or in observances, is the fruitful parent of scepticism. If we would fight against and conquer doubt and disbelief, we must not allow ourselves to be overcome by error.

A CHARGE

DELIVERED TO

THE CLERGY AND CHURCHWARDENS OF THE DIOCESE OF WORCESTER

At his Visitation in June, 1883

BY

HENRY, LORD BISHOP OF WORCESTER

RIVINGTONS
WATERLOO PLACE, LONDON
MDCCCLXXXIII

My Reverend Brethren of the Clergy
and my Brethren of the Laity,—

The return of another Visitation of the diocese, after the lapse of three years, brings with it of necessity many serious thoughts.

Many who were present with us at the last Visitation, both of clergy and of laity, are now no longer to be seen amongst us. Some who were then working in the diocese have gone to other spheres of labour; some have been called away to rest from their labours, enjoying, let us hope, the peace which passeth understanding in the many mansions of our Father's house in heaven.

But the review of the past, which a Visitation urges, prepares us for looking forward to the future also. The consideration of our own past work should arm us with resolution for the work that is to follow. If we have been slack in our discharge of duty, slothful servants of our Lord, leaving undone what we ought to have done, too often, perhaps, doing what we ought not to have done, failing to "draw all our cares and studies" the right way, let the consideration of such omissions and errors urge us to diligence in the

future; for in regard to all the work that our Heavenly Father has given us to do, the time is short. We ought to be about our Father's business; the night cometh when no man can work.

There has been little during the last three years to mark the ministrations within the diocese of the Bishop and of the clergy in their several parishes with any special interest.

Confirmations.

The number of Confirmation services in the years 1880–1882 was 182, the number in the preceding three years having been 166. The number of persons confirmed in the same three years was 22,852, the number in the preceding three years having been 19,559.

Ordinations.

The number of persons admitted into deacon's orders during the years 1880–1882 was 124, the number in the preceding three years having been 122. Of the persons so ordained in the last three years 92 were graduates, 24 had obtained certificates after residence from theological colleges, and 8 were literates; the corresponding numbers in the preceding three years having been 76 graduates, 32 from theological colleges, and 14 literates. Of the 92 graduates, also, 82 had obtained degrees at the

old Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, whereas only 64 such graduates were admitted into deacon's orders in the years 1877–1879.

These figures may be considered satisfactory as showing, so far, at least, as the diocese of Worcester is concerned, that the number of candidates for holy orders coming from our old universities is increasing. I regard this circumstance, I say, as satisfactory, because I am convinced that the best education of candidates for holy orders is still to be found in our ancient seats of learning.

It is well known that many important changes have been made recently in the constitution of our colleges and in the provisions for teaching in the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge. It was my happy privilege to take part in the protracted work of the Parliamentary Commission appointed in 1877, to which was entrusted the duty of framing new statutes and ordinances for the constitution and government of the University and colleges of Cambridge.

The Universities' Tests Act of 1871, which provided that persons taking lay academical degrees should not be required to subscribe any formulary of faith, and which thus opened the studies and honours of the Universities to all persons alike, whether members of the Church of England or not, had rendered inevitable some revision of the statutes of the universities and colleges, which had been framed on the principle

that the benefits offered by them should be open to acquisition by members of the Church of England only.

The method and means of such revision were provided by the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge Act, 1877; and I readily undertook to serve on the Commission thereby appointed for the University of Cambridge, in the hope of giving such help to the work as my long and intimate knowledge of the affairs of the University enabled me to offer.

The results of the action of that Commission are generally known. The fellowships and headships of colleges are no longer restricted to persons in holy orders. The colleges are required to contribute out of their corporate revenues to the provision of more efficient university teaching. Fellowships, no longer tenable for life without the requirement of active work, are made available for helping forward young men in professions or business for a limited term of years, or for providing permanent spheres of active work within the university.

But what most persons whose knowledge of the past history of our old universities leads them to regard them with reverence and affection, will consider of very material importance, the quasi-domestic character of our colleges is preserved. Provision is made in every college for the maintenance of divine service in chapel according to the rites of the

Church of England, as well as for the religious instruction of members *in statu pupillari* who belong to the Church of England.

The number of Professors of Divinity, for whom adequate endowment is provided, has been increased from four to six ; and other provisions for teaching are made, which seem to promise in the University of Cambridge a school for training candidates for holy orders as complete and efficient as could be wished.

It would surprise me greatly if our Churchmen are not prepared to take advantage of these benefits. I should despair of the future of the Church of England if our candidates for holy orders and our clergy are found to be slow in competing with laymen in the paths of literature and science, and are not prepared to take possession of our old colleges with all their hallowed memories, and hold them firmly and turn them to the best advantage in support of our religion. It would be an evil day for our Church if the ranks of our clergy ceased to be recruited from the long-acknowledged sources of the old colleges of Oxford and Cambridge. He would be an evil counsellor who would urge our youth, ardent, as we hope to see them, in the cause of Christian truth, to retire from general competition, and take refuge in other institutions of recent date in the fond hope of more assured safety in places where none but men who think precisely with ourselves may find a home for study. My

hearers will allow me to repeat the conviction, which I have often expressed before, that, notwithstanding all the changes which have been made, our ancient universities and our ancient colleges are still the places above all others where the highest education of our clergy can be best accomplished.

Elementary Education.

The system of inspecting and examining elementary schools in religious knowledge has been continued with success throughout the diocese during the last three years by the able inspectors to whom the duty is entrusted.

It is satisfactory to mark the improvement which has been found to take place gradually in the attainment of religious knowledge by the children of our schools from the commencement of the system of examination by paid inspectors. It appears from their last report that in the year 1882 out of 658 schools inspected, the number of children examined in them having been 66,054, no less than 466 were found worthy to be called excellent or good, while only five deserved the character of indifferent or bad.

It is satisfactory also to observe that, out of 32 Board Schools examined in religious knowledge by our inspectors, 18 were found worthy to be classed as excellent or good.

My brethren of the clergy are well aware that

the attainment of religious knowledge sufficient to pass a good examination in Scripture history or the elements of Church doctrine does not necessarily imply such impressions upon the hearts of the learners as are the foundation of growth in holiness, and give the promise of a consistent Christian life. It is the province of the clergy themselves, aided largely, as we thankfully acknowledge, in many instances by the teachers of our schools, to turn the acquisition of religious knowledge to its proper use of supplying spiritual nourishment to the learners, and to take advantage of opportunities to this effect. I need not say that I truly sympathize with the clergy and with the teachers of our schools in their efforts in this direction, and wish them heartily God speed.

Church Building and Restoration.

The last three years have brought me many occasions for attending services of thanksgiving on the completion of works of restoration and enlargement and rebuilding of churches. Work of this kind, which has been going on now continually for many years in the diocese of Worcester, has given me real pleasure. We have shown ourselves not unworthy guardians of the sacred buildings which the piety of our fathers has entrusted to our care. But though our work in this direction has been unceasing and sound and good, and we of this

generation have the satisfaction of committing the custody of our churches to those who come after us in a much better condition than that in which we received them, there is still need of further effort. There are still to be seen amongst us, here and there, churches and chapels of ancient date, much needing repair, and which, local resources being insufficient to meet the demand, still call for help from places beyond their own parochial limits.

The shifting character of our population, also, in many parts of the diocese, the migration of the inhabitants of our towns to new dwellings in the suburbs, the sudden collection of large numbers of people in divers places, brought together for purposes of manufacture or trade or commerce, give rise to many anxious thoughts, and present strong claims for help in providing fresh means of spiritual guidance and instruction. New churches must be built to supply pressing needs in such cases, new parishes formed, new schools erected, and means found for the support of the living agents and ministers by whom the necessary spiritual work is to be accomplished.

In many of our large country parishes, also, the want is sorely felt of chapels or licensed rooms in which the means of grace may be brought within easy reach of persons living at a distance from their parish church, and who from age or infirmity or unavoidable home engagements are much hindered in their use of the means of grace, and may almost

be said in some cases to be perishing for lack of knowledge.

I rejoice to know that the claims for help, to which I thus refer, are not without acknowledgment on the part of many pious and benevolent persons in the diocese, and that great and successful efforts have been made in many places to overtake past neglect and supply our long-felt wants.

Let me be pardoned for mentioning in particular the large town of Birmingham, as giving occasion at the present time for many anxious thoughts. While the population in some of the parishes in the centre of the town has been recently much diminished, the number of persons residing in the suburbs in all directions has increased so rapidly as to defy all ordinary efforts to provide them with the means of grace and suitable appliances for divine worship. We have not been able (alas! for the love of many has grown cold) to take advantage, as we ought to have done, of the offer of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, which they still renew from year to year, to endow new parishes with incomes of £200 a year as soon as suitable churches shall have been built and consecrated, and districts, containing not less than four thousand persons, shall have been legally assigned to them.

Diocesan Collections.

It will be recollected that in the autumn of last year I addressed a letter to the several incumbents of the diocese urging that the claims of societies established *within the diocese* for religious purposes should be pressed upon the attention of their congregations and collections made in church at least once in every year in aid of one or more of such societies in a regular and systematic manner.

It appeared to myself and to others, by whose counsel I was guided, that it would be well to name a particular Sunday in the year on which such collections should be made throughout the diocese, and I ventured accordingly to propose that the last Sunday in the month of January should be chosen for the purpose.

I acknowledge with grateful pleasure the ready response which has been made generally to my request; and I hope and believe that the funds of our excellent societies for church extension, for the promotion of elementary religious education, for the maintenance of the system of diocesan inspection of schools, and for the increase of the endowments of poor benefices will thus be largely and permanently increased.

I venture to repeat what I said in my letter of October, 1882, that no parish in the diocese ought to be content without one Church collection

at least in every year in aid of one or more of our diocesan societies. If the sum collected in any parish is small, as it must be necessarily in some parishes, a very good purpose at least is answered by directing the attention of the people to the work that is going on around them; and it must not be forgotten that great works are in fact accomplished by the accumulation of a large number of small sums contributed from different sources through a wide extent of country.

It has been represented to me that in some well-organized parishes the adoption of the day named for Church collections would interfere with a long-established system of offertories, which has been found to work well and to be acceptable to the people. I desire to allow its full weight to the argument thus urged, and am well content that in such cases the existing system of offertories should not be disturbed, and that some other day in the year should be chosen for our diocesan societies. But I look forward with hope to the future, when advantage may be taken of circumstances to change existing systems in this respect, and we may at length have the satisfaction of knowing that the whole diocese is making united effort on one and the same day to give effectual support to the machinery by which the spiritual wants of our parishes may be supplied where help is needed.

Agricultural Distress.

The depression which has prevailed extensively throughout the country of all interests connected with agriculture has occupied our attention painfully during the last three years. Owners and occupiers of land have suffered heavy losses, and in many cases the consequent distress has been severe. Our clergy, perhaps, may be said to have suffered more than other persons, because even under favourable circumstances of farming there are peculiar difficulties attending their life ownership of land which prevent them from turning it to the best advantage.

It will be remembered that an effort was made in the early part of last year to relieve some of the most pressing cases of distress among the clergy in the diocese of Worcester, who were suffering serious loss of income from the reduction or failure of the rent of glebe land. A considerable sum of money was collected by liberal contributions of benevolent persons for the purpose, many of such contributions being, in fact, made by persons who were suffering themselves from the same cause.

I desire to take this opportunity to express my grateful thanks, as well to the kind donors as to the several rural deans of the diocese, the committee, and the secretaries, who devoted time and thought to the work of collecting information and

distributing the money entrusted to them after careful consideration of the details of the cases which were brought before them.

It has not been thought desirable or practicable to adopt the same plan of relief in the present year, though there is reason to fear that the extraordinary financial difficulties of the clergy are by no means at an end, and that help is still much needed. It must be left to private benevolence to supply in particular cases such help as the circumstances require, and as the resources of those who are acquainted with the facts enable them to offer.

I have said that even under favourable circumstances of farming the management of land by the clergy, who have only a temporary or life interest in it, is subject to peculiar difficulties. It is not to be expected that the clergy in general should have sufficient knowledge of the subject. They cannot always find agents on whom they may safely depend for counsel. They ought not to devote to it the time which is urgently needed for the higher tasks of duty. They have at best only a life interest in the tenure.

The consideration of these difficulties leads me to think that it would be well to take advantage of opportunities, as they may occur from time to time under favourable circumstances, to put the possession of glebe land into the hands of laymen, and to invest for the benefit of the clergy the moneys

obtained from the sale in other well-secured funds, such as present arrangements of business offer in abundance.

Revised Version of the New Testament.

Since the last occasion of our meeting we have had full opportunity of becoming acquainted with the revised version of the New Testament, published by the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, in May, 1881, after much careful labour of a committee of learned men, and proposed for general acceptance.

I presume that no one among us would hesitate to say that great thanks are due to the able scholars who undertook the task for their unwearied, patient care in the consideration of many difficult questions relating as well to the sacred text of the original Greek, as to the words in which the sense of it should be translated into English. And yet I think that few who are sufficiently conversant with such questions, and who have duly weighed the merits of our existing authorized version, would be content that authority should be given to substitute the revised version instead of it for use in our churches.

There are not a few matters, concerning as well the determination of the Greek text as the English version, upon which it was necessary that the revisers should come to some conclusion, and yet upon which it appears to the minds of many com-

petent scholars, perhaps even to some of the revisers themselves, that they have not succeeded in arriving at the truth. The result could not have been different, perhaps, when in every case of doubt the decision was required to be made by a majority of votes of the persons then present, out of a large body of men of differently trained minds and of different degrees of attainment in the higher walks of scholarship. We may perhaps venture to say without offence that we miss in many passages of the translation that accurate knowledge of both the Greek and English languages which, rejecting the mere literal translation of one word by another, seizes the idiom and spirit of both languages at once, and conveys to the English reader the very meaning which the words of the original were intended to convey to the Greek reader of the sacred volume.

Neither may we forget that in the course of their labours the revisers drifted very far away from the resolution of the Houses of Convocation, which originated their undertaking and which recommended a revision of the authorized version "in all those passages where *plain and clear errors*, whether in the Greek text originally adopted by the translators or in the translation made by the same, shall on due investigation be found to exist."

We may accept the version with gratitude as a valuable, and in many respects trustworthy, commentary on our sacred books, and an important step towards such perfect rendering of Holy Writ

into our own tongue as the attainments of modern scholarship can produce; but we cannot, I think, consent that our own remarkable version, remarkable as well for its permanent real merit, as for its production at the time when it was first published, should be displaced by the revised version from the position which it has held long and deservedly in the affections of our people.

Diocesan Conferences.

It may be remembered that in the spring of the year 1881, an address was presented to me by a considerable number of clergy of the diocese, asking me to consider whether the time had not arrived for a conference of clergy and laity to be held periodically for the consideration of Church matters.

I received that address with the most profound respect; but after full consideration of the experience of an Episcopate of many years duration, and of the results of such conferences in other dioceses, as far as the knowledge of such results can be gathered from published reports, I was not able to satisfy myself that the advantages which the signers of the address anticipated would really be obtained.

It is right to add that I was strengthened in my opinion by communications from some of the clergy who declined to sign the address when it was pressed upon them.

The difficulty appears to me insuperable of

devising any method of securing such general attendance of the laity as would invest the resolutions of the proposed conferences with the respect due to the opinions of the clergy and laity of the diocese upon ecclesiastical questions. The danger seems to me to be real and great that the opinions of those persons, who might be good enough to assume the responsibility of representing the laity of the diocese in such conferences, may be regarded by the world at large as the opinions of a small ecclesiastical party, rather than the deliberate judgment of the whole lay body. I cannot think that the lay members of the Church of England in any diocese will accept the resolutions of a conference as the true expression of their opinions until means are found to give them collectively by competent authority a voice in selecting the persons by whom resolutions should be passed.

I regard with great satisfaction the meetings which we are accustomed to hold periodically in our two archdeaconries for the management of the affairs of our diocesan Church societies. They give much and welcome opportunity for mutual counsel and co-operation. I am grateful for the large attendance of members, and for the patient and often protracted consideration of the matters brought before them; and so far as the interests of the diocese in Church matters are concerned, it seems that we need wish for nothing further.

If in the desired conferences it is proposed to

travel beyond the affairs of the diocese into the region of controverted questions of general Church policy, and so to form a kind of organized debating society, rather than a practical working body addressing itself to actual home wants, I do not see what other result can be expected to follow than what is, alas! too plain in the Church and world at large in this restless age, that the minds of men should be turned away from high and holy work into the barren field of controversy, that men should forget the apostolic maxim to study to be quiet and to do their own business, that brotherly love should cease to hold the first place among us as the most essential principle of Christian conduct.

I hardly need say that the difficulties, which seem to me to prevent our giving to the proposed conference a truly representative character, apply with no less force to the Central Council of Diocesan Conferences which has commenced its sittings in London for the general discussion of questions of ecclesiastical interest, with the view of guiding the deliberations of provincial councils. An additional difficulty may perhaps, in the view of some, be found to attend the gathering of this Council in the circumstance that the order of Bishops is altogether excluded from it. I can hardly suppose that the resolutions of a body so constituted will be considered to deserve the respect and confidence of Churchmen.

In view of the difficulties which I have mentioned, and in the earnest hope of finding some

solution of such difficulties, urged, moreover, by a strong sense of the need of some properly constituted Church body which might be entrusted with authority to consider and determine from time to time such ecclesiastical matters as might be submitted to it, I joined not long since with others in a petition to the Queen, that her Majesty would be graciously pleased to issue a royal Commission to inquire and report upon the best method of creating a lay body of members of the Church of England, which may, in conjunction with the Convocations of Canterbury and York (duly reformed and combined for that purpose) prepare and submit to Parliament from time to time such measures as they may deem best calculated to promote the well-being and increase the efficiency of the Church of England.

If such a Church body could be satisfactorily formed and entrusted with the proposed authority and functions, it might be hoped that the Legislature would be content to commit to it the absolute determination of many matters of detail, the settlement of which, as questions arise from time to time, is of much importance to the well-being of the Church, but for which it can hardly be said to be desirable to seek the action of Parliament. Let me mention, for instance, such matters as the selection of lessons from Holy Writ to be read in churches, or amendment of the Lectionary, which, notwithstanding recent legislation on the subject, many of us perhaps think is still urgently needed; together

with other measures, for which Bills are now pending in Parliament, and to the full discussion and satisfactory settlement of which it is hopeless to expect that Parliament can give attention.

First Prayer-book of King Edward VI.

Addresses have been presented to me from various parts of the diocese expressing alarm, not unmixed with indignation, at the proposal, which is said to have been made deliberately and in public, to ask the sanction of the Legislature for the use in our churches of the first Prayer-book of King Edward VI., alternately with our own Book of Common Prayer.

I am not surprised that such alarm should be felt and expressed by persons who have studied the course and progress of the Reformation of religion in England, and who have duly considered the nature and effect of the proposed alternate use.

Nothing is more obvious to the readers of history than the *gradual progress* of the Reformation of religion in England, as showing the sound and sober principles on which it was conducted. "It was not," wrote the late Professor Blunt, of Cambridge, "without patient investigation, and the successive abandonment of every false position, as it proved itself to be such, that our Reformation ultimately attained the strong ground, from which it has never since been dislodged." This *gradual*

progress may be traced conspicuously in such things as the system of private Confession and Absolution, the use of Fasting-communion, and non-communicating attendance at the Lord's Supper, the Sacrifice of the Mass and the real objective Presence.

Having regard to the gradual progress of reformation distinctly to be traced in these and other matters, we may be excused for thinking that there is more than meets the eye at first sight in the proposal to bring into use again in our churches the Prayer-book first put forth by authority in the reign of King Edward VI.

There is to be found, no doubt, in that Prayer-book much that distinguishes it from Service-books, such as that of the use of Sarum, which were previously adopted in England, as well as from books which are now in use among the adherents of the Church of Rome. We have in it, for example, for the purpose, it would seem, of discouraging the practice of private confession and absolution, the introduction in the office for Holy Communion of forms of general confession and general absolution in the same words as those in use with us at present. We have in it words commendatory of those who, not thinking it needful or convenient for the quietness of their own consciences particularly to open their sins to the priest, are "satisfied with their humble confession to God and the general confession to the Church." We have in it the designation of the feast instituted by our Lord as "The Supper

of the Lord and the Holy Communion," though still with the addition of the words "commonly called the Mass." We have the direction that, while the words of consecration of the bread and wine are spoken, there shall be no elevation or showing of the Sacrament to the people. We have the very significant direction, in opposition to the old doctrine of the sacrifice of the mass, that *after the consecration* of the bread and wine, the priest should offer the sacrifice of prayer and thanksgiving and the reasonable, holy, and lively sacrifice of ourselves, our souls and bodies, as our bounden duty and service. Moreover, the terms Body and Blood are no longer applied to the consecrated elements, as of old, but they are called respectively "The Sacrament of the Body of Christ," and "The Sacrament of the Blood." We have, also, the significant direction of the rubric at the end of the "Office for Holy Communion,"—significant, I mean, in regard to the old custom of private Masses,—that there shall be no celebration of the Lord's Supper except there be some to communicate with the priest that ministereth.

It is right here to call attention, in connection with the first Prayer-book of King Edward VI., to the "Ordinal, or Form and Manner of Making and Consecrating of Archbishops, Bishops, Priests, and Deacons," though the Ordinal was not printed at first as part of the first Prayer-book, but was issued separately; for I presume that those who

wish to restore the use of the first Prayer-book would desire the restoration of the Ordinal also; and there is perhaps no formulary or document which marks more clearly the essential difference between the office of ministers of the Church of Rome and the functions of ministers of the Church of England.

The words addressed by the ordaining Bishop to candidates for the office of priest according to the use of Sarum and in the Church of Rome generally were, "Accipe potestatem offerre sacrificium Deo, missam que celebrare tam pro vivis quam pro defunctis." In the Ordinal of 1549 these words are replaced by, "Take thou authority to preach the Word of God and to minister the Holy Sacraments in this congregation where thou shalt be so appointed."

The use of the Church of Rome prescribed what is called "the tradition of the Instruments;" that is, the delivery of the chalice with wine and water and of the paten with bread for the candidate to touch. The Ordinal of 1549, retaining this tradition of the instruments, adds to it the delivery of the Bible. It adds also, in almost the same words as we use at present, an address to the candidates, in which their office is described as that of "messengers, watchmen, and stewards of the Lord," and which urges them "to teach and to premonish, to feed and provide for the Lord's family, to seek for Christ's sheep that are dispersed abroad and for

His children that are in the midst of this naughty world, that they may be saved through Christ for ever."

But our reformers of the sixteenth century, who built up under God the Church of England, though they had thus made great progress in the second year of the reign of King Edward VI., did not consider the first Prayer-book and Ordinal then published perfect. There were things contained in those documents and things omitted from them which, in the opinion of Churchmen of that day, made revision necessary, and the Church of England in later days has ratified their judgment.

To take the case, which I have last mentioned, of "The Form and Manner of Ordering of Priests," the Ordinal of 1549 retained "the tradition of the instruments;" that is, the delivery of the cup and paten for the candidates to touch. Subsequent revision has abolished this ceremony, and retained the delivery of the Bible only. And every one who is conversant with the teaching of the Church of Rome in the present day, and still more with the opinions of Roman Catholic writers of the sixteenth century, is well aware that the ceremony was not abolished without reason. The "tradition of the instruments" was held to be an essential process in "The Form of Ordaining Priests." No ordination of a priest was valid without it. It was then considered, and I believe that in the Church of Rome it is still considered, the ordinary means of conveying the

grace which shall empower the newly ordained person to offer the sacrifice of the Mass and to administer the Sacrament of Penance. Unless the "tradition of the instruments" had been duly observed in his ordination, no one could convert the bread and wine of Holy Communion into the very Body and Blood of our Lord, or effectually remit or retain the sin of penitent confessors.

May we not say, my brethren, with confidence that it was *necessary* to revise the Ordinal of 1549 so as to abolish a ceremony which was supposed to give such powers. If the ceremony should now be restored to our Prayer-book, would not the restoration give occasion to the belief that the effects attributed to it were restored also, and that the office and work of a priest in the Church of England are the same as what the Church of Rome believes to be committed to her ministers?

It would be tedious to describe in detail the many other particulars in which the formularies of 1549 have been amended by revision; but the matter is of so much importance in view of the wish that has been expressed to revive the use of those formularies, that I crave the indulgence of my hearers in calling attention to one or two of them.

The words "commonly called the Mass" were struck out of the title of the "Service for Holy Communion," as calling to mind a form of service which differs fundamentally from the rite of Holy Communion as the Church of England understands it,

and a name which, more than any other, has excited the alarm and indignation of Protestant Christians. The passage in the exhortation to Holy Communion was struck out also, which offers an apology for the use of auricular and secret Confession to a priest. The word "priest" itself, as used in connection with spiritual counsel, is changed into "minister of God's Word." Instead of the words "confess and open his sin and grief secretly," we have simply the words, "open his grief." The words "receive comfort and Absolution of us as the ministers of God and of the Church," are changed into "by the minister of God's Holy Word receive the benefit of Absolution."

In the exceptional case of sickness, for which the Order for "the Visitation of the Sick" provides a specified form of words of Absolution, the first Prayer-book of King Edward VI. contained the direction, that "the same form of Absolution shall be used in all private Confessions." In all subsequent editions of the Prayer-book this direction has been omitted; the omission intimating, it would seem, either that private Confession of sin and private Absolution at other times than that of sickness were to be discontinued, or, at least, that the use of the specified form of Absolution was to be limited to the case for which it was provided.

Important differences are observable between the Prayer-book of 1549 and our own Prayer-book throughout the "Service for Holy Communion." In

our own Prayer-book, as we know, the Communion or partaking of the bread and wine is made to follow immediately after the Consecration of the elements, no Oblation or prayer of any kind being interposed between the Consecration and Communion. The prayer of oblation does not succeed until all have communicated and the bread and wine have been consumed. Our service thus makes it plain that the Church does not direct or encourage her ministers and people to offer any other sacrifice at the time of Holy Communion than that of praise and thanksgiving and the reasonable, holy, and lively sacrifice of ourselves, our souls and bodies.

The first Prayer-book of King Edward VI., on the other hand, interposes the prayer of Oblation between the act of Consecration and the Communion; and directs the priest to pray in the prayer itself of Consecration that our merciful Father would bless and sanctify his gifts and creatures of bread and wine, that *that they may be* unto us the Body and Blood of His most dearly beloved Son, Jesus Christ. All subsequent editions of the Prayer-book have taken care to avoid the ambiguity with regard to the error of transubstantiation, which might be supposed to attach to these words, by removing them from the prayer, and directing the priest to pray instead that we receiving our merciful Father's *creatures of bread and wine in remembrance of His Death and Passion may be partakers of* His most blessed Body and Blood. In the form of delivery, again,

of the consecrated bread and wine, new words have been added: "take and eat this in remembrance"; "drink this in remembrance." The memory of our Lord's precious Death is to be in the heart and mind of the communicant, not in any supposed memorial offered in sacrifice to God. The words "Sacrament of the Body" and "Sacrament of the Blood," which are found in the Prayer-book of 1549, as applied to the consecrated elements, are now no longer in use; the Minister being directed simply to deliver the Bread and the Cup to the communicants, urging them to eat and drink *in remembrance of our Lord's Death*, to feed on Him in their hearts by faith, and to be thankful.

Add to these considerations the circumstance that the word Altar is found no less than seven times in the rubrics of the first Prayer-book, whereas it has been carefully excluded from all subsequent editions, and the word Table has been substituted for it, in conformity with the uniform teaching of our Reformed Church respecting the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper; that both in the Communion Service and in the "Order for the Burial of the Dead" of the book of 1549 it is directed that prayers be offered for the dead, whereas our Church now is at least silent about such prayers; that at the Communion of a sick person, or even at the service of open Communion in church, the priest was directed in 1549 to *reserve* part of the sacrament of the Body and Blood for the use of some

other sick person, if need be, on the same day, and carry it and go and minister the same; that he was directed to anoint sick persons with oil, if they desired it; and that the rubric at the end of the office for Holy Communion declares it to be "convenient that the people commonly receive the Sacrament of Christ's body *in their mouths* at the priest's hand," whereas in subsequent editions it is directed that the minister shall deliver it to the people *into their hands.*

Whoever duly considers the difference between the first Prayer-book of King Edward VI. and our own Prayer-book in these and many other similar particulars, and duly considers also the undoubted principles of the Church of England as they are to be found in our Articles of Religion and other sources of information, will be at no loss to learn why the first Prayer-book was considered to require amendment, and why those who value the principles of the Church of England would regard the bringing back of that Prayer-book into common use as a step in the way of undoing the Reformation and reviving extravagant errors in doctrine and ritual, from which we have been rejoicing for the last three hundred years that the piety and courage of our forefathers availed to set us free.

Church Courts.

An address was presented to me in the early part of the year 1881 by several of the clergy of the

diocese, for whom I entertain the most sincere affection and respect, in which they expressed their present distress and anxious concern for the interests of the Church in this land, occasioned by then recent painful circumstances both in the diocese of Worcester and elsewhere, and their desire to return to constitutional action between Church and Realm as provided for and guaranteed at the time of the Reformation and by the Reformation statutes.

I had no hesitation in expressing my concurrence with the signers of the address in their desire with regard to any matter in which it can be shown that the constitutional action referred to has been really departed from. I have always regarded the settlement of the laws of our ecclesiastical polity in the sixteenth century as the safeguard of the liberties of the Church of England in the matters to which they relate, and the true exponent of the duties of loyal subjects.

It is obvious, however, that the first step to be taken in the way of return to such constitutional action between Church and Realm in any matter in which it may be supposed to have been departed from is to learn what was really the nature of the constitutional action then settled; and I apprehend that with regard to such knowledge much misapprehension and uncertainty may be found to prevail among us.

An important step in this direction has been taken, as you are aware, by the appointment of a

Royal Commission in answer to an address to the Queen presented by the House of Lords, "to inquire into the constitution and working of the Ecclesiastical Courts as created or modified under the Reformation statutes of the 24th and 25th years of King Henry VIII., and any subsequent Acts."

It is understood that the Royal Commissioners have held many and protracted sittings. The result of their deliberations will be welcomed with profound interest. We may hope to obtain from their report, if not the benefit of recommendations for fresh legislation on the subject, at least the advantage of such accurate information as may lead to a general better understanding of the real position of affairs, and may have effect in removing doubts and correcting errors and persuading ready obedience to the authority of the laws which govern us.

Ecclesiastical Legislation.

The time since I last had the opportunity of addressing you has not been distinguished by any Acts of ecclesiastical legislation further than the Act for the amendment of the law of burial, a Bill for which was then before Parliament, and subsequently became law in the autumn of 1880.

I ventured to say in my address of that year that I was far from being alarmed by fear of the evil which was anticipated by many from the provision of authorizing Christian and orderly services

to be conducted in our churchyards by other than ministers of the Church of England.

I think the result has proved that such fear did not rest on any adequate foundation. I am not aware of any instances in the diocese of Worcester where undue advantage has been taken of the permission given to them by persons professing not to belong to the Church of England, or where such persons have sought to use their power to the annoyance of our clergy.

Moreover, the Act has brought welcome relief to the clergy by allowing them to use the Burial Service of our Church, if need be, in unconsecrated ground; and also to use in certain cases, when it is thought desirable, such other forms of service, consisting of prayers taken from the Book of Common Prayer and portions of Holy Scripture, as may be prescribed or approved by the Bishop.

But though the Legislature has not added much to our statute book during the last three years affecting the Church and clergy, the attention of Parliament has been invited to many important questions by persons submitting Bills respecting them. Some such questions have been raised year after year persistently, and are still pending before Parliament. I allude to such measures as the Bill for regulating Burial Fees, the Bill for the establishment of Church Boards, the Bill to amend the law relating to the Sale of Patronage, the Bill to facilitate the admission to office of Churchwardens

and Sidesmen, the Bill for altering the Statutes of Cathedrals, the Bill for amending the law relating to Pluralities, and Bills for amending the "Church Discipline Act," and the "Act for the Regulation of Public Worship."

The introduction into Parliament of these and other measures affecting the Church and clergy shows at least that the attention of our Legislature and our people is directed with lively interest to such matters. I need not here repeat what I have already ventured to say about our processes of legislation for the Church. Let me content myself with saying that, while we seem justified in looking forward to the future with hope, it is well that Churchmen should be on their guard and watch the progress and course of events with care.

The Church of the Future.

The occasion of our meeting has led me, not unnaturally, to turn my thoughts to the past, and to commend to my hearers such reflections upon the occurrences of the last three years as may be suggestive and useful with regard to future conduct. But a few remarks, perhaps, will not be considered out of place, referring more directly to the future.

No one can have paid attention to what is passing around us, and made himself acquainted with prevalent ideas about religion, without many anxious, and I may say painful, thoughts about the

progress of Christianity and the Church in future. It is difficult not to believe that changes are imminent, which may seriously affect the interests of our people; for the influence of religion is felt of necessity through all our domestic and social and political relations, and spreads itself wide on all sides. Perhaps there never was a time when the thoughts of earnest men were fixed more intently and intelligently on questions of religion. Full and free inquiry is demanded; and we may rest assured that nothing will be allowed permanently to maintain its ground, which cannot stand the test of such inquiry.

Let me adduce one instance in illustration. Our most esteemed writers of the Church of England, following in the footsteps of the Reformers of the sixteenth century, have been accustomed to appeal to the records of what is called Primitive Christianity, as an unquestionable source of authority in matters of ritual and doctrine. When men first awoke, as it were, from indolent acquiescence with accustomed teaching and observances, and cast away the burden of misleading ritual and false doctrine which had grown to an intolerable amount in times of mediæval darkness, nothing seemed more obvious than the wisdom of going back to the records of the early days of Christianity, when it might be supposed that the false doctrines and practices, which it was sought to cast away, had no existence. And in most cases our Reformers had

an easy task to show the comparative novelty of much that was found most open to objection.

Subsequent and recent investigations, however, go far to show that the records of the early days of Christianity do not supply us with ground on which we may altogether build with confidence. Competent scholars, who have applied themselves to the task of examining such records, and have made themselves familiarly acquainted with them, speak in notes of warning. And, indeed, it does not require any large amount of learning to perceive, upon even a cursory perusal of such records, how immeasurable is the distance between the productions of writers in the Ante-Nicene or sub-Apostolic age and the books which we are accustomed to hold in reverence in the Canon of Holy Scripture.

The great debt which we owe to men of the sub-Apostolic age, it would seem, is not to be estimated by the value of the writings which they themselves have left behind them, but rather by the jealous care with which they applied themselves to fix and preserve the Canon of Holy Scripture. We owe them, indeed, great and earnest thanks, but our thanks are due chiefly for the unwearied patience with which they examined the writings in common use among Christians, and carefully separated the Canonical books from those which did not deserve the name, and so delivered to a grateful posterity the true record of what ought to be the foundation of Christian faith and duty.

No Christian can value too highly the office and work of our fathers of the sub-Apostolic age in this respect. No Christian can be too grateful for the treasure they have thus bequeathed to us. But the gratitude, with which we thus regard their labours, must not urge us to forget the caution with which a sound and exact criticism warns us to accept their writings.

The late Professor Blunt, of Cambridge, who had studied the writings of the authors of the sub-Apostolic age with more than usual diligence, and who was remarkable among men for accuracy of observation and expression, has left on record his opinion that "old recollections attached to the Jewish Church had still their effect on the views and vocabulary of the early Christians." The careful reader of these early writings will find numerous instances where the germ of doctrine or ritual, for which there is really no foundation in the undoubted records of Holy Writ, has served as the source of subsequent errors which, though easily detected in their full development afterwards, lay concealed in the words of the unsuspecting authors of the evil.

And indeed, the need of caution and distrust of which I speak ought not to surprise us if we duly consider what the authors of our truly Canonical books tell us of the abundance and growth of error in their own day, whether of ritual or doctrine. If such errors in their own time required from the

apostles continual repression and reproof, should it be considered a strange thing if error is found to prevail occasionally when the guiding hand of apostolic inspiration ceased to act? Ought we to put implicit trust in all that we find in writings of fallible men, who had no longer the benefit of unerring truth to guide them?

Look at the Epistle of St. Paul to Timothy, in which he bids him to "charge some that they teach no other doctrine" than what St. Paul himself had taught; showing clearly thereby that so-called Christian teachers were then to be found who taught such other doctrine. Hear him when he declares that some had "turned aside from charity, out of a pure heart and of a good conscience and of faith unfeigned, unto vain jangling, understanding neither what they say nor whereof they affirm." And, again, that some, "having put away a good conscience, concerning faith had made shipwreck;" and, again, that some did not "consent unto wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine that is according to godliness."

Consider, again, the words of St. Paul to Titus, "There are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision, whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things that they ought not." Consider the statements of St. Paul in his Epistle to the Corinthians respecting the abuses which had grown

up with regard to the Lord's Supper. Consider what he says to the Galatians of persons who were then preaching "another gospel," different from what he had preached; of persons who troubled the Galatians, and would "pervert the Gospel of Christ;" of persons who were trying to "bewitch" the Galatians that they should not "obey the truth"; of persons who, "having known God, or rather being known of God, were turning again to the weak and beggarly elements," whereunto they desired again to be in bondage, and were observing "days and months and times and years."

If doctrines and practices, which our sacred writers condemn, were to be found among so-called Christian teachers in their days, is it to be supposed that such errors ceased altogether when the authority of the apostles, which had been used to repress them, was withdrawn? Ought we to accept and adopt without much jealous caution whatever of ritual or teaching men of the sub-Apostolic age have left us?

The true conclusion to be drawn from the considerations which I venture to urge seems to persuade us that, in our effort to shake off the undoubted and obvious errors which the tract of time and the incurable ignorance and infirmity of fallible men have allowed to gather round our religion, we must not be content to stop short of the fountain head. We cannot set our feet with full confidence on any ground but that which has been laid for us by our

Lord Himself and His apostles. We must go back to the beginning, and try to learn, with all the resources which the most enlightened thought and patient labour can command, what it was that our Lord Jesus Christ Himself taught, and what it was that He authorized and enabled His immediate apostles to teach also. The labours of many competent critics and scholars are trying to put us in possession of this treasure: what are really the lessons to be gathered from our Lord's own teaching; how far did He adopt and sanction and confirm the religion prevalent among the Jews at the time of His sojourn upon earth; how far did He declare the shadow of good things, which that religion set forth, abolished by the revelation of the substance; how far did He condemn and forbid the erroneous teaching of those who then sat in Moses' seat; what did He teach Himself and authorize His apostles to teach respecting the One God and Father of all, respecting Himself as the Son of God, respecting the Holy Spirit, respecting the kingdom of God, which He came and lived on earth to open; what is the true interpretation of the words of Holy Writ upon these and other subjects of immeasurable interest, having regard to the well-known character and meaning of Eastern modes of thought and language.

We look with eager interest upon many, and not unsuccessful, efforts which have been made thus to put us in a position to see and hear our Lord as

those among whom He lived and taught could see and hear Him. The Church of the future, may it not be said, at least in our own country, must be made to rest on the result of strict investigation of such things. Upon no other conditions can we hope to retain the allegiance of men of thoughtful and pious and earnest minds, who will not consent that their knowledge of Divine things should rest on any but what commends itself to them as a safe foundation.

It is often contended (and the persuasion is very common among us) that persons who have cultivated the power of reason by pursuits of scientific research are thereby unfitted for the examination of questions of religious truth, and are indisposed to accept the teaching of Divine things which requires faith. I think that many illustrious instances, which might be cited, of the happy union of real science and real faith should prevail with us to deny this contention. I am disposed, on the contrary, to look with hope on the prospect of our men of science becoming the best and true supporters of the Church of the future. Such persons know better than others, if they have really succeeded in deserving the name of men of science, what are the limits which divide what is true from what is false. They have learnt and see and feel a little of the mysterious secrets of nature and of life. They are qualified above other men for adoration of the Infinite and the Eternal; and if the Holy Spirit

of God once touch their hearts, they are qualified above other men for devout submission to the teaching of the Word of God and for the practical exhibition of the graces of Christian charity and patience. "Is there nothing in the study of science," asks a writer of our own day, who combines in his own person the highest attainments of science with the most devout Christian faith, "which may have a not merely innocuous but even beneficial influence in religious matters? I think there is in more ways than one, but time would not permit of my referring to more than one. In the study of the phenomena of nature there is one quality which is pre-eminently called into exercise, and that is truthfulness. The investigator, who wishes to be successful, must be on his guard against prejudice, and hold his mind ready to receive fresh indications of truths hitherto unperceived. And is not this what should be our attitude as regards Divine truth? New light will break in upon us from time to time, if we seek after truth and keep our minds honestly open to its reception. This requires patience and effort; and there is sometimes a temptation to take a short cut to truth by throwing one's self into the arms of some party or school of thought, instead of borrowing from all alike that which to the honest seeker after truth appears to be good and sound, and rejecting that which appears to be false; thus proving all things, and holding fast that which is good. This

honesty of mind, which leads to the recognition of that which is good in all parties and to the avoidance of party spirit, is, I believe, fostered by scientific study."

My brethren of the clergy will allow me, before I end what I wish to say, to make one practical recommendation respecting the ministrations of their sacred office. The recommendation indeed applies to the laity of our several parishes as well as to the clergy, but it rests mainly with the clergy to give it practical effect.

Do not be led away by the prevailing fashion of the day, to give more importance than they deserve in your ministrations to matters ecclesiastical and ritual in comparison with what is spiritual and moral.

The teaching of our Lord and His apostles in the record of Holy Writ embraces very little of what may be called ecclesiastical or ritual. It deals mainly with what affects the hidden man of the soul in things moral and spiritual, as they govern the inner life and the outward conduct. We can gather very little from what our Lord and His apostles said and did about forms of Church government or observances of ritual in worship. It seems to be of obvious purpose and design that great liberty should be allowed to Christians in these respects. Such things are not the essentials of Christian faith and duty. Different bodies of Christians in different places, or persons of different

habits of mind, formed by the special circumstances in which they have been severally placed, may arrive at different conclusions and adopt different forms without offence. The one Church or Body of our Lord may comprehend them all. There are many folds for the sheep of our Lord's pasture. "It is not necessary," says our Church in her 34th Article of Religion, "that Traditions and Ceremonies be in all places one, or utterly like; for at all times they have been divers, and may be changed according to the diversities of countries, times, and men's manners, so that nothing be ordained against God's word."

But in regard to what is spiritual and moral the case is widely different. The teaching of our Lord and His Apostles here utters no uncertain sound. It is clear, precise, definite, abundant. These are the weighty and essential matters upon which the people justly look to the ministers of the Church for guidance and instruction. These are the things which the clergy are bound to press upon the attention of their people, in season and out of season; leaving things ecclesiastical and ritual as much in the background as our Lord and His apostles have left them; applying themselves wholly, as our Ordination Service urges, to doctrine and exhortation taken out of the Holy Scripture; drawing all their cares and studies this way; and continually praying to God the Father, by the mediation of our only Saviour Jesus Christ, for the

heavenly assistance of the Holy Ghost, that by daily reading and weighing of the Scriptures, they may wax riper and stronger in their ministry, and so endeavour themselves from time to time to sanctify the lives of them and theirs, and to fashion them after the rule and doctrine of Christ, that they may be wholesome and godly examples and patterns for the people to follow.

There cannot be a greater mistake, or one more fatal to the unity in which the followers of our Lord ought to be joined together, than to attribute to His Church as essentials things which in truth belong to it only as accessories, which may be adopted or altered or rejected according to circumstances without offence. Some outward organization, and the observance of some forms, no doubt, are necessary for the "body of faithful men" in every place, whether house, or parish, or country; but it would be a grievous error to ascribe to such outward organization, whether of Church government or of ritual, the properties of inviolability and permanence which belong only to the spiritual body of which it is the framework.

Our Lord's Church in its essence is divine. Its constitution is fixed by its Heavenly Author, and is unalterable. The "members of Christ," who compose the body of the Church, are joined to their Lord by one and the same tie. It is animated and actuated by one Spirit. But the outward organization of the Church is an accessory or accident. It

may be framed, to a great extent, in any particular place by human intelligence and effort; and, if occasion arises, what has been so framed by man may be altered by man, provided that in such outward organization, whether original or amended, nothing be ordained that is "contrary to God's Word written."

Holy Communion.

I should not be true to my convictions if I did not take this opportunity to say a word of warning, perhaps the last for which an occasion like the present may be given me, upon a question which appears to me of supreme importance at the present time among us.

No one acquainted with the elementary principles of the Reformation of the Church in England, and with the history of the times in which that Reformation was originated and carried through its several stages and completed, can fail to see that difference in views and usages respecting the service of Holy Communion is the main mark of distinction between our Church of England as it now stands and what all who value the Reformation believe to be the corrupt doctrine and practices of the Church of Rome.

Our clergy, above all men, ought never to lose sight of the fundamental difference between the Church of England and the Church of Rome in the

matter of the priesthood. It is certain that the great body of our people, whether sufficiently well-informed themselves of the nature of this difference, and of the reasons on which it is based, or only receiving their convictions on the subject by tradition from their fathers, have never ceased to regard the distinction as fundamental.

It is the office of the priest of the Church of Rome to "offer Christ in sacrifice for the living and the dead;" or, as it is sometimes expressed, to "consecrate and offer in sacrifice the true body of Christ."

The Church of England has repudiated the notion of such sacrifice and commits no such office to its ministers. It authorizes its priests to "preach the Word of God, and to administer the Holy Sacraments." It instructs them to bless or consecrate, as we call it, the bread and wine with such devout and solemn ceremonial as we believe to have been in use at the beginning, when the authority of the Apostles ordained "a collective participation in the Lord's Supper," as the great feature of Christian worship, and the chief bond "by which the first Christians were joined to the Apostles, and to one another, and to a unity in Christ."

Whoever looks closely and intelligently at the doctrine and usage of the Mass in the Church of Rome on the one hand, and at the doctrine and practice of the Church of England in the administration of Holy Communion on the other, cannot

fail to be satisfied that, so long as such doctrines and usages are maintained, union between the two Churches is impossible. If persons are to be found, professing to be members of our Church, who say that they do not see the impossibility of such union, it is difficult for unprejudiced persons, who regard simply the real meaning of accustomed forms and words, not to attribute such views to that obscurity of conscience which seems to ensue in the persons who hold them upon continued opposition to authorities which they profess to obey, and forced interpretation in their own sense of the formularies which they are content to use in the services of the Church of England.

Let my brethren of the clergy pardon me if I venture to warn them, with all the earnestness which the occasion of our meeting warrants, against the use of words in public or private teaching which may mislead their hearers in this important matter. Let your utterances be bold and clear, marking in distinct outline the truth which you are bound to teach. Do not let it be possible for simple folk who hear you to have difficulty in distinguishing what you say from the teaching of the Church of Rome in what our Church calls a "dangerous deceit." Use all diligence to guard your people against what our Reformers justly considered the most monstrous error into which the weakness of superstitious or the craft of designing men has led astray the faith of the simple.

I am unwilling to end what I wish to say with words which may sound harsh in the ears of some of us, though a strong sense of duty compels me to offer a note of warning against what seems to me a real danger. Let me rather take up the saying of our Lord's beloved disciple at the close of his long life of labour in his heavenly Master's service, a saying in entire harmony with the feelings which I have studied to cultivate towards all my brethren, whether clerical or lay, in the diocese of Worcester, and which I have reason to hope (and I say it with the deepest gratitude) are not without some cordial response towards myself. "When St. John tarried at Ephesus," we are told, "to extreme old age and could only with difficulty be carried to the Church in the arms of his disciples, and was unable to give utterance to many words, he used to say no more at their several meetings than this, 'Little children, love one another.' At length," Jerome continues, "the disciples and fathers who were there, wearied with hearing always the same words, said, 'Master, why dost thou always say this?' 'It is the Lord's command,' was his worthy reply, 'and if this alone be done, it is enough.'"

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